A
BOOK ON
ANGLING

BY

FRANCIS FRANCIS

Edited with an introduction by

Sir HERBERT MAXWELL, Bt.

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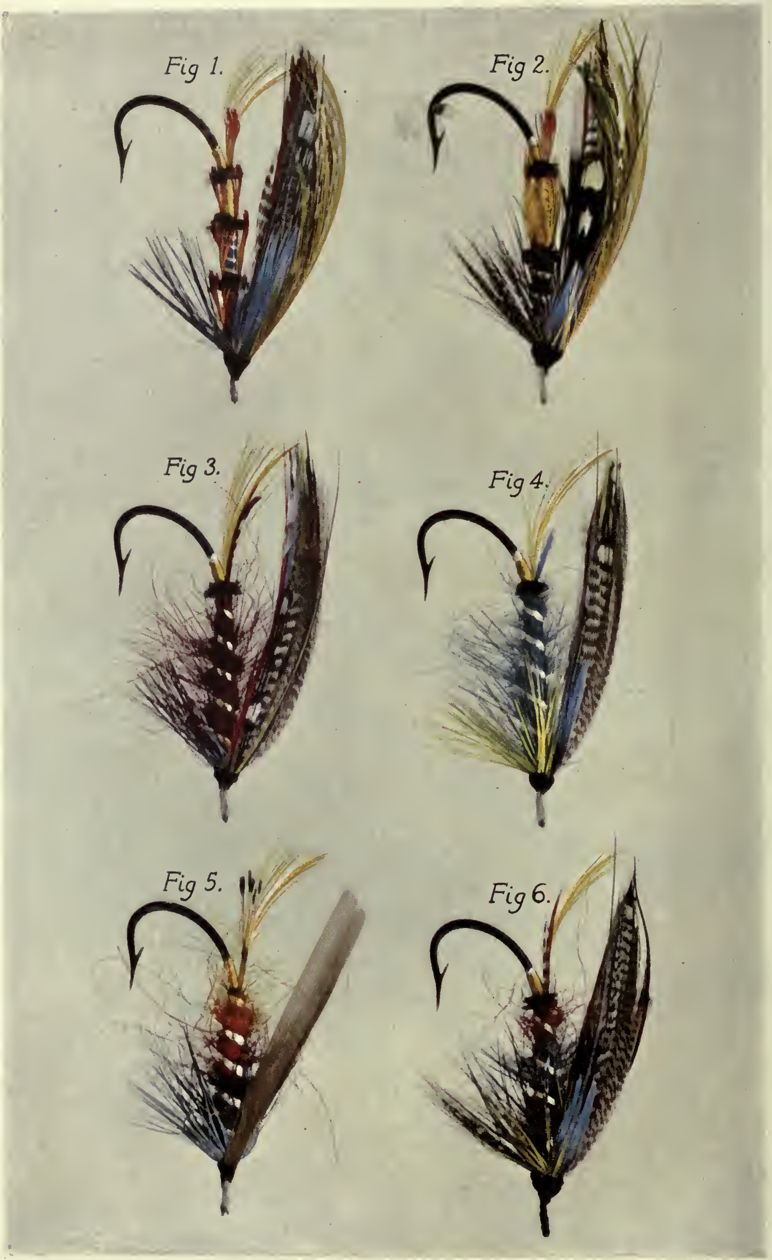
A BOOK ON ANGLING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Frontispiece.

1. THE POPHAM.
2. THE JOCK SCOTT.
3. THE CLARET JAY.
4. THE LEE BLUE.
5. THE DUN WING.
6. THE BUTCHER.

A BOOK ON ANGLING

BEING A COMPLETE TREATISE ON THE ART OF ANGLING IN EVERY BRANCH

BY

FRANCIS FRANCIS

EDITED WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY

SIR HERBERT MAXWELL, Bt.

CONTAINING NUMEROUS PLATES IN COLOUR AND OTHER ILLUSTRATIONS

PHILADELPHIA
J. B. LIPPINCOTT COMPANY
LONDON: HERBERT JENKINS LTD.
1920

The Mayflower Press, Plymouth, England. William Brendon & Son Ltd.

SH439
F8
1920

EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

BY SIR HERBERT MAXWELL, BT.

IT'S a far cry to Loch Awe,* runs the adage with which the dreaded Campbells, after a successful raid on some weaker clan, were wont to defy reprisals; but it is a much further cry to that distant day in 1867 when I opened a parcel containing Francis Francis's *A Book on Angling*, a gift from the author. Of the intervening half-century I have spent—serious persons may say wasted—a considerable section by the waterside, and another section by the fireside conning some of the vast amount of angling literature that has flowed from the press during that period; but in all these years I have never detected any fallacy in Francis's precepts for such branches of the fisher craft as I have practised, neither have I handled any book which gives such succinct and trustworthy instruction in every form of freshwater angling. Excellent treatises upon this or that department of the sport might be named; but Francis dealt with them all; his experience of them was universal, his knowledge encyclopædic. There have been changes in practice since Francis fished and wrote. The art of dry fly-fishing, for instance, he dismisses, though with approval, in a couple of paragraphs (pp. 111, 128); it is now almost exclusive of any other method in chalk streams, besides being often adopted with success on northern and Irish waters.

In the angler's equipment many improvements have been devised. Just as Izaak Walton had never seen a reel or, as he calls it, " a wheel about the middle of the rod or near the hand, which is to be observed better by seeing one of them than by a large demonstration of words," and advised Venator if he should hook a great trout to throw the rod into the river to him, " for so I use always to do when I meet with an overgrown fish," so Francis had no experience of the charm of a

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* Southron readers kindly note that Loch Awe is sounded to rhyme with " how " not with " haw."

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split-cane trout rod (for salmon fishing commend me still to sound greenheart), nor of the convenience of a Malloch reel in minnow fishing, nor of the virtue of adhesive tape which has rendered ferrule-jointed salmon rods as obsolete for all time as muzzle-loading shot-guns. To these and other changes I will venture to call attention in notes ; yet I wonder whether Francis, almost my earliest preceptor in salmon fishing (actually the earliest was the butler of a neighbour in Galloway) would wholly approve of my undertaking to edit his book, seeing that I have so fallen away from grace as to be numbered among those infidels whom he lashes (with more sound, I am convinced, than fury) in the opening paragraphs of Chapter X.

"There are many persons," runs the anathema, "who hold that half a dozen flies are enough to kill salmon on any river in the kingdom, and who will despise the notion of such an extended list of flies [as the author was about to describe]. To such irreverend scoffers and heretical unbelievers I have nothing to say. Let them indulge in their *répertoire* of a bit of old Turkey carpet and a live barn-door rooster. They are, to the artists who attain eminence in the delightful occupation I have endeavoured to illustrate, what the chalker of pavements is to a Landseer. Equally well, no doubt, would they land a salmon if they hooked him with a clothes prop, a jack line and a meat hook" (p. 249).

I suspect that when he penned this fiery passage Francis had his tongue in his cheek. He was far too close an observer —far too good a naturalist—far too experienced an angler—really to believe that it made a ha'porth of difference in the chances of raising a salmon whether the body of the fly was clad in crimson silk or azure wool ; whether the wings were wrought out of the sober plumage of a brown turkey or from the radiant feathers of half a dozen tropical birds ; whether the tinsel, an opaque substance passing between the overhead light and the fish's eye were silver or gold ; whether, in short, supposing the angler to have put up a fly (we call them flies for convenience, but birds, bats, or battle-axes would be equally appropriate terms of similitude)—supposing, I say, the fly selected be neither too large to scare the salmon nor too small to attract its attention, it is possible to divine what particular colour may suit the fancy of a fish newly arrived from the sea.

I have killed salmon with the fly in thirty-one different rivers in England, Scotland, Ireland, and Norway, and have never been able to detect preference on the part of the fish for any particular colour or shade of light and dark.

Tom Todd Stoddart, than whom no amateur ever devoted more time and attention to salmon fishing, tells how "a well-known landed proprietor in the north of Scotland, the possessor on both sides of a noted salmon river," never used any flies except those dressed entirely of white material; "and although occasionally competed with by one of the ablest craftsmen in the district . . . who actually took pleasure in using flies of the opposite colour [black], managed generally to bear off the palm."

The late Lord Percy, a keen and accomplished salmon fisher, once told me that it did not much matter what fly one used in the North Tyne, provided it was not a Blue Doctor, at which the fish would never look. I turned up my old fishing book, in which there was fixed a fly of that very pattern, and written under it—"Seven salmon in North Tyne. Tied by the porter at Reedsmouth Station." These fish had been killed in the same stretch of water that Lord Percy used to fish, namely, the Hargroves beat, just below Reedsmouth.

As it is a matter of perfect indifference to me what fly I fish with for salmon, always provided that it is of the size that seems suitable for the water and the season, when I am fishing a river with which I am not acquainted I usually put up, for the sake of harmony, whatever the gillie or boatman prescribes. But whereas these local experts are sometimes very dogmatic, desiring the angler, after one fly has been tried without success, to change it for another, my patience is not always equal to the occasion. Tweed boatmen are apt to be specially exacting in this respect, probably because there is no salmon river to which so many inexperienced fishers come as to that classic stream. I was fishing the Bemersyde water some years ago; my attendant was even more tyrannical than the average of local experts, perpetually prescribing a change of fly and specially insisting upon a Silver Wilkinson (Plate XVII, Fig. 3), which at that time was the fashionable fly on Tweedside. I became so bored by his insistence that, before returning to that water in the following year, I devised a fly quite different from the everlasting Wilkinson, and determined to fish with no other. Without consulting the boatman, I put up the new fly, a fiery creature with a body all gold tinsel and a magenta beard.*

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* The latest edition of the Wilkinson has been toned down by adding a sky-blue hackle over the flaring magenta.

"What fly's that ye have on?" asked the tyrant. "I never seen the like o' that used here."

"Oh, well!" I replied with all the nonchalance I could assume, "it is a fancy of my own I want to try."

"I don't think it's the proper fly at all for this water," rejoined the other. "Have ye not got a Wulkinson in your box?"

It required all my stock of resolution to persist; but I did. We crossed the river, and set to work under the hanging wood on the west side of the famous Haly Wiel. Not a fin stirred till after two o'clock; but we were pretty busy that afternoon. The new fly accounted for seven fish from eight rises—22 lb., 22 lb., 20 lb., 18 lb., 16 lb., 16 lb., and 8 lb. I have used it on many other rivers since that day, and found it just as good as any other pattern—and no better! In justice, however, to the memory of Francis and to those who hold a contrary opinion to mine on the subject of salmon flies, I must tell what happened a few days later in the same water. On this occasion the Haly Wiel fell to the lot of a brother angler; my beat being the far less productive one immediately above, named Cromwiel. Here I killed two fish in the forenoon, 26 lb. and 16 lb., and then went down to eat a sandwich with my friend below. Cromwiel having done so handsomely, I made sure that he must have had much pulling in the Haly Wiel. To my surprise he had not moved a fish. I asked what fly he had been using. He showed me a small Silver Grey. "Wrong metal," said I, "try that one"; and I gave him one of my golden fancy of the same size. I then started back for Cromwiel; but had not gone a couple of hundred yards when I heard a view-halloo, and, looking back, saw my friend fast in a fish. He landed it and one other that afternoon, while I moved nothing more in Cromwiel. Certainly the change of my friend's fly seemed to indicate the superior attraction of crimson and gold over grey and silver on that particular afternoon; and, although the incident leaves me cold, it did much to establish the reputation of my fly, which was christened the "Sir Herbert" after its creator.*

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* Although, alas! Francis had made his last cast long before the genesis of this fly, I have ventured to give its likeness in Plate XVI, Fig. 2. It is dressed thus: Tag and body all in one, gold tinsel ribbed with gold twist, orange hackle over; tail, a topping. Three turns of scarlet mohair, picked out, next the wing, crimson hackle at shoulder. Wing two slips of dark turkey with white tips over two tippet feathers; blue chatterer cheeks or kingfisher, red macaw horns, black chenille head.

Howbeit, despite my incredulity about what is not demonstrable, I admit that I am not insensible to the charm of a varied assortment of salmon flies. I find it noted in my fishing book that on 15th October, 1870, I was fully under the spell of Francis's precepts about a change of fly. Fishing just above high tide mark in the Water of Luce, I raised a small fish five times without touching him, changed the fly every time and killed him, seven pounds, at the sixth rise. I cannot think that the result would have been any different had I made no change, which is the course I should follow now in the unromantic light of experience.

In one other matter I venture to express dissent from Francis's doctrine, namely, his belief that salmon feed, in the sense of taking nourishment, during their sojourn in fresh water. Here, again, demonstration is difficult, if not impossible, available evidence being mostly of the negative kind.

> "Salmon," says the author, "do not perhaps feed very voraciously, because in salmon rivers, as a general rule, food, and particularly in the heavy waters salmon inhabit, is not very abundant, and the salmon is not given to roaming about far from home in search of food; but I very much question if anything passes his lair within eye-shot, which is at all worth his notice, that he does not take stock or toll of" (p. 245).

To the concluding sentence of this passage I may reply by describing what I have witnessed in the Linn of Glencaird, below a fall, or *foss* as it would be termed in Norway, on the river Minnick. The water of this little river is crystal clear, enabling one, except when it is in spate, to watch the movement of fish as plainly as in any chalk stream; the said linn is a long deep pool with precipitous rocky sides. Lying on the top of these rocks I have watched salmon in the depths below, sometimes resting almost motionless, sometimes swimming leisurely around, from time to time one flinging itself out of the water for no apparent cause. Besides the salmon a few small trout, five or six inches long, are poised near the surface, quite fearless of the great fish below them, snapping at every fly that floats within reach. I have never seen a salmon pay any heed to these little fellows. Very different would have been their expectation of life had the large fish been pike instead of salmon.

Even those gillies and water-bailiffs who are sensible enough to perceive that the salmon rivers of Norway and Northern

Britain afford no supplies adequate for the sustenance of a lusty fresh-run salmon—even they are slow to acquit kelt salmon of preying upon trout and even upon young of their own kind. A kelt's appearance condemns him; he *looks* so hungry that one thinks he must be after prey. Perhaps in the interest of science you kill a kelt which you have landed, cut it open and show your gillie that the stomach is empty. He may say—it has often been said—that the fish when hooked has the power of ejecting the contents of its stomach. Wait a minute. If this fish has been taking food within the preceding four-and-twenty hours, there will be remains of it in the intestine. The intestine is void also. If your skill in dissection serves you, it may be possible to convince your gillie, not only that the intestine is empty, but that it is actually closed, so that for an indefinite period previous to the capture of that kelt no food can have passed that way.

This, however, is no fitting place for airing at length the views I entertain on the problem; but whereas it is a perennial subject of argument among anglers, I venture to suggest two considerations to be taken into account by those who feel an interest in the matter. First, let them study the report by the German ichthyologist, Dr. Mieschen Russ, on the post-mortem examination of several hundreds of Rhine salmon—clean-run and kelts. He examined minutely the digestive tract of these fish; he found the stomachs of all of them to be empty, but in two instances he detected traces in the intestine of the scales of some small cyprinoid fish. Second, that if it be admitted, as surely it must, that the supply of food in a Highland river is wholly inadequate for the support even of the very limited number of salmon which, in these days of drastic netting, find their way into it, what must have been the case in primitive times when salmon were free to enter our rivers in dense shoals such as swarm up the rivers of the Pacific coast of North America? although even there the stock is being steadily depleted by the machinery used at canning stations.

I should have expected Francis, who knew the Thurso, to have described a method of fly-fishing for salmon that I learnt many years ago on that river, which contains long reaches of sluggish water. To practise it, instead of beginning to cast at the head of a pool and working down, the angler begins at the tail of the pool, casting across and working the fly round in the usual way with as long a line as he can rightly command.

After every cast, just as the fly falls on the water, he takes a couple of paces backwards—that is, in the direction of the head of the pool, and so continues till he reaches the top. This plan is the easiest way to fish a stretch of dead water, for the backward paces after the cast straighten out the bag in the line. Moreover, even in a brisk stream, a salmon will often move to a fly brought up from behind him, which he has refused to notice when shown him in the ordinary way. Times without number has this happened in my experience. The most memorable instance of it was on 26th February, 1900. I began fishing Kilfedder stream on the Helmsdale from the top, water very high, but in fine colour. I touched three fish going down, but none of them took hold. Arrived at the tail of the pool I began backing up; before reaching the head of it I landed five clean fish. I then fished down the whole of No. 1 beat without seeing anything. The lowest cast on that beat is called the Flat Pool. I fished it down without moving anything; turned and backed it up, and had five more springers by the time I reached the top. It was now getting dusk; there was no more than time for a cast over the head of Salzcraggie, where, fishing down this time, I landed another salmon, the eleventh in eleven consecutive rises. One advantage of this mode of fishing a pool is that, whereas it is easier to guide a salmon down-stream than to lead him up against the current, there is less chance when playing him of disturbing water over which the fly has not yet passed.

Since Francis fished, observed and wrote, considerable advance has been achieved in our knowledge of the life-history of the salmon. The systematic marking of both clean fish and kelts, undertaken and maintained through a long series of years, first, by the late Mr. Walter Archer, and subsequently by Mr. W. L. Calderwood, who succeeded him as Inspector of Salmon Fisheries under the Fishery Board for Scotland, has elucidated much that was previously obscure in the seasonal movements and rate of growth of salmon and has dissipated many errors that prevailed on the subject. Most notable and unexpected has been the light thrown upon the period between the first descent of the smolt or young salmon to the sea and the fish's first return to fresh water. It used to be generally assumed that all salmon made their first appearance in the rivers in the form of grilse. But this was conclusively disproved by the operations conducted by Mr. Calderwood and Mr. P. D. Malloch in the Tay. In the spring of 1905 a very large number of smolts were netted on their way to the sea, and each was marked with a piece of silver wire fixed through the fore part of the dorsal fin. These smolts had been hatched in the early months of 1903; three of them were recaptured in June, 1906 weighing from 3 lb. to 4¾ lb.; twelve were taken in July, weighing from 3¼ lb. to 7⅛ lb.; twenty-seven were taken in August, weighing from 5 lb to 10½ lb. No more of the fish marked as smolts were recorded as taken until the nets went on again in February, 1907, in which month five marked fish were taken weighing from 7¼ lb. to 9 lb. These, besides fourteen others taken in March and April, were part of the run of small salmon so well known to anglers and net fishers as spring fish. In that year fifty-seven salmon were taken with the tell-tale silver wire in their fins, all except two being landed from the nets before they were taken off on 20th August. The heaviest of these fish weighed 19 lb., the total weight of the fifty-seven salmon being 741½ lb. From this it is clear that the only difference between a grilse and a salmon is that the grilse returns to the river after a sojourn of from thirteen to sixteen months in the sea, while others of the species hatched from ova deposited in the same season defer their return to fresh water until the second, third, and even fourth year after going to the sea.

So the old Scots gillie's definition of a grilse was not wide of the mark. He was asked how he could tell a salmon from a grilse, a test which has puzzled many an angler.

"Oh it's easy kent," he replied. "The same as ye can tell an auld wife frae a lassie."

Most of the salmon flies chosen for illustration by Mr. Francis have been reproduced in the present edition from examples dressed by Mr. Forrest, who presides over the London branch of the house which has been so long famous in Kelso. But whereas fashion in salmon flies is as fickle as in feminine attire, I have asked Mr. Forrest to give two or three examples of those which have found favour with anglers since Mr. Francis passed away.

I have to thank Mr. J. Arthur Hutton and Mr. P. D. Mallock for the photographs of river scenery.

HERBERT MAXWELL.

MONREITH,
March, 1920.

PREFACE

TO

THE FIRST EDITION

WHEN first infected with the fever of Angling, more years ago than I care to count up, my ambition was to catch every species of freshwater fish, from the minnow up to the salmon, which inhabits our British waters. That satisfied, my next desire was to write a work, which should contain within one volume (as far as might be possible) the fullest and most varied information upon angling generally, in each branch of the art which had ever been published; and with this resolve I commenced collecting the matter for the present work nearly twenty years ago. Taken up and laid aside from time to time, little by little it has steadily progressed towards completion. In the course of that period of time I have taken occasion to visit and to fish nearly every river of note in the kingdom; my connection with *The Field* affording me peculiar facilities for obtaining permission to fish very many waters which are closely locked against the general public; and I have roamed England, Scotland, Wales, and Ireland over to gather fresh knowledge, and to put it into a practical and concentrated form for the use of my readers.

A modern work on general Angling has long been much needed. We have works upon fly-fishing, and excellent ones too; we have good works upon spinning and trolling; we have few modern works upon bottom-fishing at large; and we have no modern book upon all of these styles combined, since the last book of any note of that sort, which is "Ephemera's" *Handbook*, was published twenty years ago, and angling has made great strides in the last twenty years.

One thing the student may rely on, viz. all that is set down here is the result of carefully conned experience, often proved. I have not entered the realms of fancy, and I have not borrowed the experience of others as though it were of my own, and of my own origination. I have endeavoured to borrow as little as possible: and where I have been obliged to borrow, I have striven to make the fullest acknowledgment of my indebtedness, and to do that justice to others which I hope to have done to myself. The branch in which I have been the most compelled to borrow is in the trout flies. The reason of this is obvious, as the flies on which the trout feed are the same to-day that they were 500 years ago. Perhaps to Mr. Ronalds' *Fly-fisher's Entomology* I am the largest debtor, and a better authority one could not borrow from, since it is by far the best work that has ever been written on the subject. But it must not be forgotten that even Ronalds borrowed these flies for the most part in his turn. Let the reader turn to the earliest book published on fly-fishing, and he will there find described by Cotton all the best flies taken by the trout in the present day, and which have been more or less reproduced and described by every subsequent angling writer up to Ronalds. There we find the red-brown (February red), the blue and yellow duns, the house fly, the green drake, the hawthorn, the black gnat, the ant fly, the whirling dun, the peacock, the barm fly, and other flies given by the very names they are now known by: while most of the remaining flies which the modern angler uses are also described, though under other names; but they can easily be identified by the method of dressing laid down for each of them. These flies, then, are again reproduced in Ronalds, who for the first time describes and classifies them entomologically, thus rendering to the fly-fisher one of the greatest boons conferred upon the art since Cotton's day, as the angler is through Ronalds enabled to identify each fly with nature, and to study its habits and changes. All that I have been able to do while following in so well-marked and beaten a track—and it is all that any other author could do—has been to make such suggestions upon the dressing of the various flies as may render them, in my opinion, better imitations of nature than have yet been made public, and to select and make such suggestions as to those flies which are the greatest favourites with the fish, as may simplify matters to the beginner.

In inducting the tyro into the mysteries of the art, I have endeavoured to make every direction and information as clear and practical as possible. This work is intended to be a useful and not merely a decorative one; thus, the plates are not for the sake of ornamentation, but for direction, and as an aid to the student of tackle making and fly tying. Each illustration of tackle is really needed, and the flies shown are not a mere selection of gorgeous and pretty subjects, or I should have chosen very differently; but each fly is a specimen of some separate class of flies, in which a special peculiarity of manufacture is evident.

I have to thank many kind friends for assistance in lending tackle and flies as subjects for the engravings, and also for description, as will be found in the body of the work.

I have given much time to this book, but I have given it willingly, for it was in deed and in truth a labour of love. Whether the angling public, to whom I dedicate it (desiring no more potent patron), will appreciate my labours remains to be seen, and so, without further apology—if an attempt to supply a long-felt and obvious want, the existence of which few persons have been in a position to know and feel so well as myself, be thought to require an apology—into their hands I commit it.

FRANCIS FRANCIS.

THE FIRS, 1867.

PREFACE

TO

THE SECOND EDITION

IN preparing the Second Edition of this work, it has been my endeavour to rectify the faults and omissions contained in the First. In collecting and arranging material coming under so many heads, and where similarity of method, etc., often runs one department into another—and especially when many years have been occupied in the preparation of the work—the difficulties of arrangement and of avoiding confusion are much greater than would be supposed. Whatever oversights, therefore, may have occurred from these causes, I have now endeavoured as far as possible to correct; and I have also added, for the greater convenience of reference, both for the angler and fly tyer, an index of the fullest possible nature, and I trust it may be found useful. I have further added between thirty and forty pages to the work itself; having, for the purpose of perfecting the fly list to the various salmon rivers in the kingdom, given new lists of flies for no less than ten more rivers than were given in the First Edition, and appended additional information on lake trout flies, general tackle making, and many other subjects which appeared to me to be capable of advantageous expansion.

I have now but to convey my thanks to the angling public for very marked favour extended to the First Edition of this work, which, I am informed (by those who have been in the habit of selling angling works for very many years), sold more rapidly than any other angling book produced during the last quarter of a century, a practical compliment which authors of all kinds very fully appreciate; and I can but hope that the Second Edition may be found even more worthy of favour than the First.

FRANCIS FRANCIS.

August, 1867.

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A BOOK ON ANGLING

CHAPTER I

BOTTOM-FISHING

The Origin of Angling—Pond-Fishing—Punt-Fishing—The Norfolk Style—Bank-Fishing—The Gudgeon—The Pope—The Bleak—The Roach—The Rudd—The Dace—The Chub—The Barbel.

THE art of Angling is a very ancient one, and it is difficult to say when it did not exist. Indeed, man might even have taken a lesson from Nature herself, and doubtless has done so. For the Angler or Fishing-frog (*Lophius piscatorius*) has for its necessities as complete a rod, line, and bait appended to its nose, and uses this apparatus with as much skill in decoying within reach of its voracious maw the unwary fish, which are deceived by the shining appearance of the filament forming the bait, as the deftest fly-fisher employs amongst his human imitators. The fishing parties of Antony and Cleopatra will be fresh in the memory of every schoolboy,* while representations of fish and fishing have been found upon some of the oldest tombs and most venerable remains extant. In every community in savage life, too, are found instruments of angling; rude enough, but sufficiently effective for the wants of those employing them; showing the various arts used in fishing to have been of primitive and universal invention.†

It is not, however, our purpose to give a retrospective history of angling. Our business lies with the present, and with a very brief notice we shall dismiss the past.

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* The story of Antony employing divers to fasten fish on to his hook is, no doubt, a singular specimen of angling. But the Chinese may be said to practise the plan habitually. The rocks and stones at the bottom of the sea on the Chinese coast are covered with small shell-fish. Two men go out to fish; one holds a line to which is a baited hook; the other, a diver, takes the hook and a hammer and dives to the bottom, and there he begins cracking and knocking to pieces the masses of shell-fish. The fish draw round to feed. The diver selects his fish, and literally thrusts the hook into its mouth, and his friend above pulls it up.—F. F.

† Ælian, writing in Greek about 115 A.D., instructs his readers in fly fishing, and recommends a red tackle.—ED.

One of the first treatises in the English language on angling is that of Dame Juliana Berners, or Barnes, in the Book of St. Albans. It is entitled *The Art of Fysshynge with an Angle*, and was published in 1496. There were other authors who added to the stock of angling literature, but the next one of note was the well-known Izaak Walton, who wrote *The Contemplative Man's Recreation*, and first published it in 1653, and in fifteen years it ran through five editions. Since then, with the additions by Cotton and Venables, the book has run through an extraordinary number of editions.*

From that time down to the present the number of writers upon angling matters has abounded beyond measure, and the literature of angling is one of the richest branches of literature we have. As the writers have increased, each one adding his particular notion or two to the common stock, so has the art progressed towards perfection, and, long ere this, fish would have become extinct, but that nature has wisely ordained that, as the fishermen become learned in their art, the fish shall become learned also, and thus hickory and horsehair, gut and steel, are robbed of a portion of their destructiveness; and although our dear old friend and father Izaak no doubt would form a most agreeable fishing companion, we question, if he revisited the scenes of his former exploits, with the same tackle he used then, whether he would not find rather more difficulty in "pleasuring some poor body" with the contents of his creel than he was wont to do.

The art of angling, as pursued in the present day, must be divided into three branches—Bottom, Mid-water, and Top or Surface-fishing. The first comprehends bait and float-fishing of every kind; the second spinning, trolling, and live-baiting, and the last, daping and fishing with the artificial fly. As the first has by far the greater number of followers, owing to the greater facilities offered for its pursuit, we shall commence with that.

BOTTOM-FISHING may be subdivided into still-water and stream-fishing. Still-water is usually the first essay of the tyro, and with that we shall commence our instructions.

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* Richard Franck (1624–1708), a jealous rival of Walton, a better naturalist and fly-fisher, wrote his *Northern Memoirs* in 1658, but did not find a publisher till 1694. Those who can put up with absurdly euphuistic phrasing will find it a singularly interesting treatise on angling for salmon and trout. It was reprinted in 1821, with an introduction by Sir Walter Scott.—ED.

Still-water or Pond-fishing may be practised under various circumstances, and the tackle used must depend upon the fish to be fished for. The fish which usually frequent pools are roach, perch, carp, tench, bream, eels, and jack. The tackle, as we have said, must depend much upon circumstances: such as whether the pond be shallow or deep, clear or muddy, much fished, or the reverse, and also upon the kind of fish the angler is going after. If he be not particular, as few young anglers are, we recommend to him a bait and tackle which will take all pond fish, and even the jack himself at times.

Let him employ a good long bamboo rod, not beyond his strength. It is always advantageous to have a reel, as big fish are capricious, and sometimes will prefer the clumsy bait of the tyro to the neat and trimly impaled worm of Mr. Professor himself; a gut bottom of not less than two yards; a light cork float (Plate II, Fig. 2, p. 49) carrying four or five No. 1 shot, the last of which should be a good foot from the hook; his hook should be upon rather finer gut than the line, and the best general size he will find to be about No. 6, 7, or 8, it does not matter a great deal which. If there be many roach in the pond, and he desires to take them chiefly, perhaps the latter size. If carp, tench, and perch, then the former is best.

Let him plumb the depth accurately, and having fixed upon a nice spot, *near weeds*, but quite clear of them at the bottom, let him fix his float so that the bait may just touch the bottom, not swim in mid-water. His hook should then be baited with a well-scoured red worm, and having thrown in a dozen or so of bits of broken worm round about the spot he is going to fish, let him drop his bait in softly, and having stuck a forked stick into the bank for his rod to rest on,* let him lay his rod down, and keep out of sight, until he has a bite. Pond-fish always bite slowly, and before they move away with the bait give ample time to the angler to reach his rod and take it up.

While his rod is, as it were, fishing for itself, he will do well to look out for another spot near his own ground, to which, by casting in a few odd broken worms or gentles from time to time, he can allure the fish, so that when he is tired of his present pitch, he can go to another already baited. Thus he will lose no time in his fishing, and will be enabled, by working from spot to spot like this, to fish over a good deal of the ground advantageously.

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* If it be necessary for his rod to extend over the pond, by resting the part in front of the reel on the fork, and by pressing the part behind the reel down by means of a hooked stick forced into the ground, the rod can be kept in position and out of the water easily.—F. F.

The above is the best general plan for the young angler to adopt. If, however, he intends angling for any particular fish, he will find the method of doing so described under its special head in another part of this chapter.

In BOTTOM-FISHING upon streams there are various methods and tackles employed. In large rivers it is advisable to use a boat or punt, as there are many places which cannot be reached by fishing from the bank. Of punt-fishing, however, we shall treat hereafter. At present we shall confine ourselves simply to bottom-fishing from the bank.

The first point the angler should settle is the choice of a swim; and having once decided upon this, and properly baited it, he should not be in a hurry to quit it for another. He must select a spot where there is the best appearance of fish. He may see the fish sailing about at the bottom, or in mid-water, or jumping about on the surface—in which case he will not have much difficulty in deciding: but it may happen that the water is deep and quiet, and he will not have this method of determining upon his fishing ground. Let him, then, if not too lazy, get up very early in the morning, and take a walk by the riverside; and soon after daybreak, when all is yet quiet, he will see the fish begin to break the water, and roach, dace, barbel, bream, and other fish will jump about, or put up their heads, as if to see what sort of a day it is to be. Let him then note where these rises are the thickest, and choose that place. The angler can do the same thing late in the evening; but the fish do not as a general rule move nearly so freely then as in the morning.

If he has no means of obtaining this information, and knows not whom to ask which are the recognised swims, let him walk along the banks of the river and note where the grass is well worn by the long dwelling or treading of muddy feet; and let him look out for traces of clay, bran, or other *débris* of groundbaits, which are usually sufficiently visible to point out the desirable spot. If none of these serve, then he must rely upon his own judgment, choosing a swim neither too deep nor too shallow as regards the water, nor too swift nor sluggish for the stream. The neighbourhood of good overhanging banks or large bushes, a bank of weeds, or a deep hole, to form harbours for the fish, is always desirable. The ground should also be as level and free from obstructions along the bottom as possible. Very much in the choice of a swim depends on the fish to be angled for. Dace, gudgeon, and barbel like rapid and moderately deep water. Roach, perch, and bream like deeper and quieter water. The shape of the bodies of the fish forms a very fair criterion to judge from in this respect. Deep, flat-made fish cannot hold the rapid streams so well as the sharper and more rounded ones, though good roach-fishing will at times be had in pretty heavy water.

The angler, having decided upon his pitch, should, if he can manage it, bait it freely some twenty hours before he intends to fish—not an hour less. Many a day's sport is spoilt by the swim being baited the very night before the angler is going to fish ; and when he comes, on the next morning, some ten hours after, the chances are that he finds the fish have only just done feeding upon the bait he threw in the night before. The fish are then full, quite indisposed to feed, and a tame, faint bite or two alone rewards him. To coax the fish on, he then puts in more bait, which extinguishes every shadow of a chance he might have had of fish on that day, and after an hour or two with scarcely any sport, he goes away disgusted with his loss of time and absence of sport and waste of bait, when he ought only to blame his own lack of judgment. Suppose a swim well baited at nine overnight, that swim ought not to be fished until the fish are quite hungry again, and ready to feed, which will not be until about three or four o'clock on the ensuing afternoon ; and when the fishing is commenced a very few scraps of ground-bait will suffice to bring the fish on and to keep them on the feed. The angler should reflect that his object is not merely to gorge the fish, but to keep them anxiously expecting food. On the Thames, for example, more ground-bait is often wasted and thrown away in one day than, judiciously applied, would suffice for a week's sport.

In ground-baiting a pitch overnight the method depends upon the bait to be employed. If gentles are to be employed, the best plan is to enclose them in a ball of bran and clay mixed up. The same may be said of chopped worms. Greaves or scratchings should be scalded, broken small, and mixed up with clay, or not, according to the stream. Bran with bread, rice, boiled wheat, grains, and such baits are best worked up with the clay while cheese should be made up into small round balls, not larger than marbles. But for the baiting while fishing it is best to cast the worms, etc., loose without any clay, merely throwing them up above the swim, so far that they may find ground within it; and here let the angler be very sure that he does this accurately, as much depends upon it, for it is useless to fish in one place when the ground-bait is in another. Cheese may also be so used, and gentles likewise, if the stream will admit of it, not otherwise. Bread, rice, pearl-barley, barley-meal, etc., should be worked up into very small balls, about the size of a plum, upon a small stone, or with such other matter as shall cause them to hold together until they reach the bottom. If it be desired to use bran, grains, malt, boiled wheat, or such baits, they should, if the stream be at all swift, be worked up together with some of the above baits in order to give the mass sufficient coherence to carry it unbroken to the bottom; meal will serve well for this purpose if it be well kneaded. On the Norfolk rivers a barley-meal bolus is the bait for roach, and boiled barley for bream.

The aim while fishing should be to distribute and disperse the bait as much and as soon as possible, that many may get a taste, but few a surfeit, which latter they easily do when the large adhesive clay balls are used.

If it be not convenient to the angler to bait a swim overnight, he will do well, if possible, to pursue the same plan as is recommended in pond-fishing, viz. of baiting two or three pitches, stopping in each only so long as the fish continue biting; then casting in a little bait and going on to the next, and so each again in turn, and thus he will most probably get the most sport possible at the least expenditure of time.

The pitch having been properly baited, the tackle should be suited to it. The float should be proportioned to the depth and strength of the stream, and should be also so weighted as to sail steadily along, carrying the hook just touching the bottom without the float being sucked under by the whirl of the stream, and with about from one-half to three-quarters of an inch of the quill showing above water.

To ascertain the depth of the water and suit the float to it, a leaden plummet is generally used by Thames fishermen, though the Nottingham fishers eschew it and have another method of ascertaining the depth, which I shall notice in the proper place. In Plate I, Fig. 7, page 9, will be seen cuts of two plummets, one of rolled sheet and the other of solid lead. Unroll the rolled one for a turn or two, hook the hook on the bottom edge of the lead and roll it up so as to secure the hook within, or put the hook through the ring and hook it into a piece of cork fixed in the bottom of the solid one. Then having set the float at what you judge to be about the depth, drop the plummet into the water to the bottom, keeping a tight line, and lift it once or twice to see that all is clear. If the float goes under water, slip it up the line. It it does not reach the water but is above it, drop it down, and so on until it is adjusted, so that the hook shall just touch the bottom while about an inch of the float is above the surface. Some fish require the bait to drag a little more than others, and for them, of course, a longer allowance of depth on the line must be made. Having ascertained the depth, take off the cap of the float, take a half-hitch of the line on the top to secure it, and replace the cap, which should fit pretty tightly to prevent any slipping or coming off. Then bait the hook, drop the tackle into the water, and let it go with the stream ; as it goes down follow it with the rod-point, keeping the point always as directly over the float as possible. If there be no disturbance of the float but it swims serenely on, let it go on to the point which you have marked out as the end of the stream, or as far as the time allows ; and before withdrawing it in punt-fishing always strike ; for fish will often take the bait just as it reaches the end of the swim as it begins to rise from the ground, owing to the tension of the line not permitting it to go further while the stream still carries it on ; and as this is a sort of running away on the part of the bait, it is often attractive to fish that have been following it ; or it may be that it comes more prominently into view. However that may be, always strike at the end of the swim pretty sharply. But should the float, in its progress, dip suddenly down under surface of the water, strike instantly. In punt-fishing this should be done from the elbow, because there is a good deal of slack line between the rod-point and float to be tightened, and there is a long angle to be brought into a straight line before the rod-point can be brought into direct action on the hook, and the further off the float is down the stream the more acute this angle is, and the more power is required to reduce things to a straight line again between the rod-point and the hook ; and this is the reason why it is necessary to strike harder towards the end of the swim than when the float is directly under the rod-point. In bank-fishing, however, there is no such angle, and the rod is always over the float, so that the slightest jerk of the wrist suffices to fix the hook in the fish. If the float only dips slightly, strike ; and at any suspicious behaviour on the part of the float, still strike. Different fish have very different ways of biting, and even the same fish seldom bite two days together in the same manner. A wee bleak or gudgeon will often bob the float down almost out of sight, so that a novice thinks he has a most important bite, while a two-pound roach will often barely move the float at all; sometimes the float will be thrown up or lifted, sometimes will sink almost gradually as if the hook had touched the bottom; and when this is the style of biting it mostly proceeds from good fish well on the feed. I like to see it as it nearly always heralds good sport. But all these peculiarities the novice must learn from long experience, for no book can teach him. The great thing to aim at is never to use more force in striking than is absolutely necessary to fix the hook, lest damage or needless wear of tackle and hooks be the result. Having hooked a fish, if possible coax him out of the swim that he may not disturb the others, and play him at your leisure in the nearest vacant space. Be not over hasty to land your fish, or you may lose him; but, on the other hand, waste no time over him. Experience again alone will teach what strain your tackle will bear.

In landing a fish you may lift him in by the rod, weigh him in by the line, or handle him in by the gills or tail, or use a landing-net to him, or gaff him. The first method you only adopt with very small fish, which will not perhaps strain the rod. The second you employ with fish that are doubtful in this respect. Having played your fish until it is nearly conquered, take hold of the line, draw the fish gently up to the bank or boat, carefully judge the length to see all clear in lifting him in, so that the fish may not come in contact with bank or boat and so be knocked off or induced to struggle in mid-air, which is almost certain loss; and when the fish is for the moment supine, lift him steadily, but quickly and without any jerking, over the bank or boat side into a place of safety.

Handling a fish in is more often resorted to when the net or gaff happens to be left at home by accident, and is usually employed on large fish, as large trout, big pike, or salmon; for example: Bring the fish up to the side, and when he is quiet slip the hand behind the gulls and grip the fish firmly, lifting him out at the same time. Some persons put the finger and thumb into the eyeholes of the pike, and lift him out thus; but they should remember the pike's sensations. Tailing a fish out is more often employed on salmon. The fish is brought to a shelving bank of gravel, gripped suddenly, but cautiously and firmly by the root of the tail, and run up over the gravel

PLATE I.

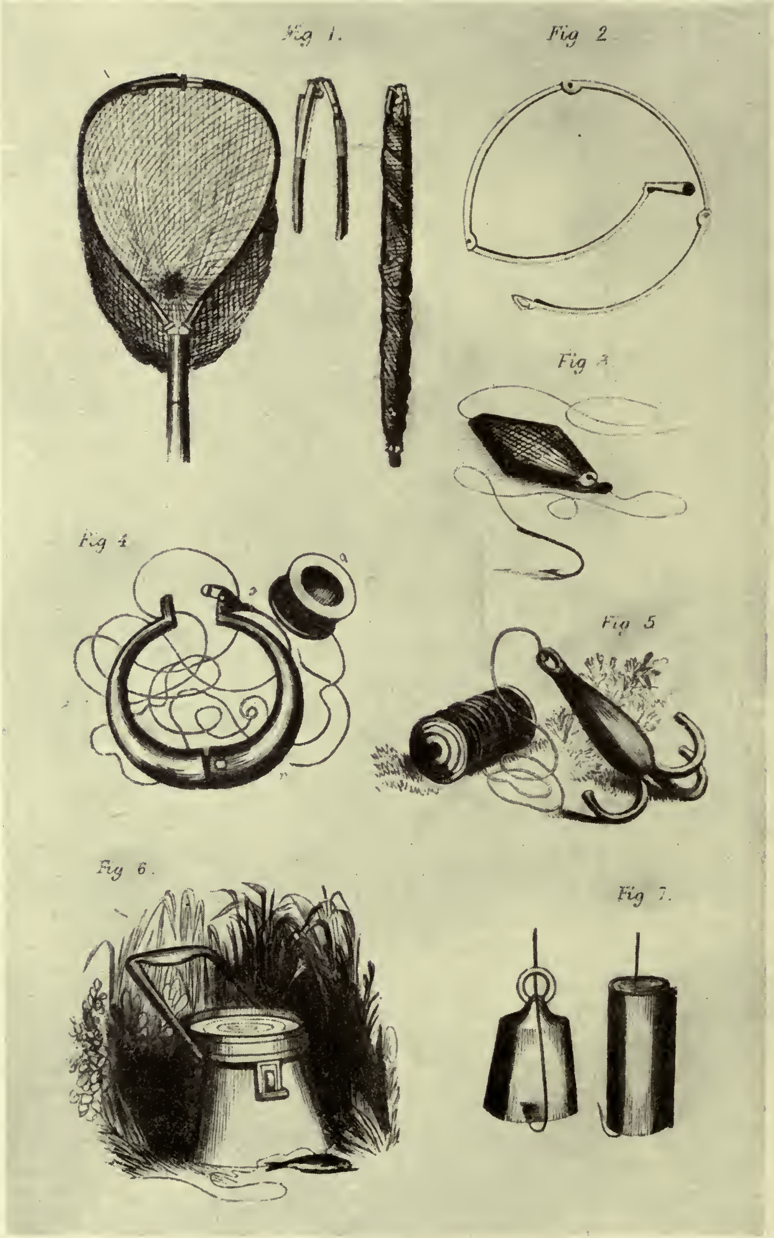
Fig 1.
Fig 2
Fig 3.
Fig 4
Fig 5
Fig 6.
Fig 7.

To face Page 9.

LANDING NETS, ETC.

before he knows where he is.* And now a word on landing nets.

In Plate I, Figs. 1 and 2, page 9, I have given cuts of two nets or frames, which by folding or compressing can be packed up and carried about with the rods or in cases. In punt-fishing, however, a circular fixed frame is all that is required. There are various methods of attaching landing-nets to the person, so that they may be ready to the angler's hand when walking along the banks of a stream, and yet not in his way when fishing. I find a spring hook fixed on the handle, and hung over the basket strap on the left-hand side, as good as any; but anglers can see various plans at the tackle-makers and select for themselves. In handling a landing-net, some little skill is requisite: the netsman should never dash at the fish, but sinking it in the water, and keeping out of sight as well as he can, wait till the fish is brought round, and then moving the net softly, till the fish is within the ring, he should lift him smartly out.

The gaff is a sharp-pointed steel hook used chiefly for landing salmon. In very sharp and shallow streams, the landing net is often rather unwieldy, and the gaff is preferable. The great thing in using the gaff is to keep as much out of sight as possible: wait till you are sure of your mark, extend the gaff beyond the fish, and then strike it suddenly in drawing at the fish and weighing him up at the same time.† But to return.

In bank-fishing, the angler should never be without a clearing ring (see Plate I, Fig. 4, p. 9), or his remissness may result in his straining his line or losing it. He will do well, too, to have in his pocket one of those curved hook knives which are made for screwing into the landing-handle. He may thus upon occasion cut a weed or twig to which his tackle may be hooked, and which otherwise might be out of reach and might necessitate a breakage. A drag with a coil of string is also serviceable (see Plate I, Fig. 5, p. 9). These things are often useful and take up very little room in carriage. A small triangular fold-up camp-stool is a very good thing too, and saves many an angler from incipient rheumatism; for though a scrap of waterproof will keep off damp, it is no protection from cold. This stool also goes easily with the rod, and weighs but a trifle.

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* If possible wear a glove for this delicate operation. It gives one a far firmer grip.—Ed.

† In gaffing a salmon from the shore, the gaff should invariably be laid *over* the fish, and drawn firmly home without jerk or violence. In landing a salmon from a boat, the gaff may be laid *under* the fish without risk of fouling the line.—Ed.

In bank-fishing perfect quietude is very advisable; and if the angler desires to stamp his feet, or run about, or indulge in any method of quickening his circulation, it is very advisable that he should retire at least fifteen or twenty yards from the bank, if he would not frighten and disturb the fish. On his first approaching the water, he must be very cautious, as the bare sight of his figure suddenly moving about on the bank will often serve to frighten away every fish within several yards; although after a time, and if not too suddenly disturbed at first, they will become accustomed to and endure his presence if he remains still and quiet. It is always advisable to keep as much as possible out of sight, if you desire successful fishing; and the angler should bear this in mind, that anything which comes between the water and the sky frightens the fish instantly; whereas if there is a high bank, a tree, a plantation, or what not, at the angler's back, provided he does not make too violent motion as as to attract attention, he may almost see the fish swallow the bait. When on the bank, too, he should remember to let his motions be as little *lateral* as possible.

Punt or boat-fishing differs little from bank-fishing, as regards the means employed, and much of what has been set down as regards baiting will also apply to punt-fishing. A favourite pitch is sought out, and the punt or boat is usually moored across the stream by means of heavy poles, shod with sharp irons, being thrust into the bed of the river, and the head and stern of the punt fastened thereto. Sometimes, however, and more particularly when the Nottingham style of fishing is employed, the punt or boat is not moored across the stream, but is moored in a slanting direction at an angle of about 40° or 50° with the direction of the current. The boil and bubble created by the obstruction which the punt causes when moored across is thus nearly avoided. The Nottingham style will be explained hereafter.

I have spoken of the Norfolk style of fishing, and it may not be out of place here to say a few words about it. The punt on the Norfolk rivers, instead of being moored across the stream as in the Thames, or in a slanting direction, as is more common when "traveller" fishing in the Nottingham style is practised, is moored up and down in a line with the current, so that there is little or no disturbance of the water. The swims are usually of considerable depth, often from twelve to sixteen feet or more. The angler employs two rods, which are longer than the Thames punt rod, sits sideways, and fishes over the side: having also a spare rod with a well weighted line with a float, which acts as a dead line beside him, while fishing with the other rod in the usual way. The fish caught are chiefly roach and bream; for the first, barley-meal is the ground-bait, and for the second, boiled barley, the hook-baits being principally gentles and worms. Large takes are frequently made, and it is common to estimate the take by the stone weight.

The rods used in bank and punt bottom-fishing with the float, differ considerably. In punt-fishing the rod should be light and handy, and from ten to twelve or thirteen feet in length. If longer than this, the constant striking through a long day's fishing tires the arm. Still it is always advisable for the angler to use as long a rod as he can conveniently manage, as it gives him not only a longer swim but more power over it. Bamboo cane is the most usual material employed. Punt rods of solid wood are often rather too heavy. and the white cane too light for the work. Many anglers, however, prefer rods made of solid wood, as they are supposed to stand heavy work better, though I have not found that they do so. The best rod to stand work I ever had, was a single stick of bamboo without joint or ferrule of any kind, with merely a spliced top lashed to it of some eighteen inches or two feet in length. I have used this rod for twenty years, and it is as straight as ever it was. For solid rods hickory is the best wood.

For bank-fishing the rod should be longer and larger, and it is seldom the custom to use a rod of less than fifteen or sixteen feet in length: while on the Lea and elsewhere fishermen use rods of a prodigious and unwieldy length, sometimes up to twenty-two or twenty-three feet. These, of course, from their great length, require to be made of very light material, and the white East India cane is most commonly employed. As a general rule, the tackle used in bank-fishing is lighter, and the point of the rod being always just over the float, and usually scarcely a foot or so from it, there is no long length of loose line on the water to strike up, as there is in punt-fishing, and the strike, therefore, when there is a bite, is, as I have said, much lighter, being a mere twitch; while it is not necessary, as in punt fishing, to strike at the end of every swim. The wear and tear, therefore, is nothing like so much in a bank as in a punt rod, and a lighter material can be employed. It is astonishing what a difference in the wear and tear of rod-tops the addition or subtraction of a dozen or so of shot on the line makes. For example, suppose your dozen shot weigh only the eighth of an ounce. Suppose you only strike sixty times in an hour, which is very far under the mark, and suppose you fish a good day of, say, twelve hours. The addition or subtraction of these twelve shot will have given your fragile rod-top eighty-four ounces more to jerk up in the course of one day. It will be seen, then, that this point of meting the weight of your tackle as near as possible to the requirements of the stream is worthy of much consideration. I have often seen roach and dace-fishers fishing in an easy stream with great heavy floats, carrying perhaps near half an ounce of shot, when they could have fished it with a porcupine quill. The consequence is that the extra shot make a splash at every strike, and they are so thick and large that the fish can easily discern them and thus they alarm one-half and all the best of their fish. I like upright rings to all my bottom rods, finding them safe and more convenient to the line.

In general bottom-fishing a very fine gut foot line is preferable to single horsehair. By means of passing the strand of gut through a machine and so reducing it, tackle makers have been enabled to bring it down to almost any fineness; far finer, indeed, than horsehair. This is called drawn gut, but if the angler can obtain the gut of sufficient fineness in its natural state, i.e. without being drawn, it is better in every respect, being much stronger and infinitely more durable; as in drawing it, the hard outside surface which protects the gut is shaved off, and nothing but the central and pithy part is left. Drawn gut can easily be distinguished from natural gut at the first glance. It is dull in colour instead of bright and shining, and when in the coil is far less springy and hard if bent. It soon frays away, and a very few times of using rots it, whereas a really good sound undrawn gut line, if properly used, will last for months. It is not possible, however, always to get really fine undrawn gut lines of first quality, and the drawn gut, which can be had of any fineness, is certainly far preferable to hair in point of strength.* Many roach-fishers, however, still use single hair. Now, hair has this objection, viz. it is so elastic that whenever you strike a good fish the line will spring to such a degree that the hook often fails to fix itself properly. Added to which, from its lack of strength and liability to crack at knots, many good fish, hooks, and much time are lost both in playing the fish and in repairing losses. Still, as I have said, many excellent fishers (for roach particularly) do employ it, and it certainly is a very pretty bit of sport to kill a roach of a pound and a half in a nice eddy with a single hair. Young fishermen should always go through a course of single-hair fishing. Nothing contributes to give them such a delicate touch and such an accurate perception of the exact amount of strain their rods and tackles will bear as fishing with single hair. And no bottom-fisher is worth the name who cannot (*if his fish be well hooked and tackle sound*) kill a two-pound roach in a sharp stream with a single hair. Gut should be stained slightly to suit the water, and a very pale green and light amber are the only colours ever required. It is the custom to stain gut of a deep ink blue, but this colour is far more discernible in the water than the plain undyed gut is. Gut is of two sorts, good and bad. Good gut can be easily told by either the eye or the touch. Good gut should be round, clear, bright, hard, even in size, and almost colourless. Bad gut is flat, greasy, dull, raffy, or rough and frayed, uneven in size, and of a green tinge ; indeed the greener it is the worse it is. This is the gut that is chiefly used for drawing purposes. Bad gut may often be had for a little money, but it is never cheap to the angler. When not using it, always as much as possible keep your gut from the light, for damp hardly rots it sooner than sunlight.

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* See note on page 233 about modern substitutes for gut.—Ed.

The best reels for bottom-fishing are the plain reels with a light check. Do not have a multiplier even at a gift. It is an abomination.* In using hair from a punt, unless you hold the line loose in your hand, the check will be almost too much, and a plain winch is preferable. Your winch should hold forty or fifty yards of fine line. This running or reel line should be of very fine dressed silk ; undressed, it is apt, when wet, to cling about the rod and rings, and it also rots sooner. (In the Nottingham style undressed lines are required.) Never use any mixture of horsehair in your reel line, as it is so apt to knot and tangle that it is always catching in something. In using the long cane rods mentioned above, the Lea fishers do not often use a reel or running line at all, but simply fasten their lines to the eye of the rod-top. When a good fish is hooked they play him for a time with the whole rod, which, from its length, enables them to follow the fish and keep over him almost anywhere he may choose to go. As he becomes more tractable they unscrew and drop off a joint or two, until, having him almost supine, half the rod is thus dropped and the fish is led in by a small light rod of some three or four joints, and of very manageable dimensions.

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* The author might be of a different opinion now. Multiplying reels of American make are highly praised by those who use them, and are reckoned indispensable in tarpon fishing.—Ed.

Of floats for stream-fishing, I have before said they should be suited to the water. I may now say that there are several sorts, but I never use but two. For heavy streams cork floats of various weights, and tapering gradually both ways to the ends (the longest taper below), and for light streams a porcupine quill. These two can be had of any size, to take fifty shot or five. Floats are also made of quills, tapered and fastened up in lengths, and heavily varnished, and also of reeds of various lengths, etc.; but although they are very pretty to look at, they do not stand enough wear and tear for my money. (For floats various, see Plate II, p. 49.)

Hooks are of many sorts and sizes, and should be suited to the fish to be angled for. The best size for ordinary roach, dace, and barbel-fishing, whether from the bank or punt, is that which will carry one or two gentles well, and that is from No. 7 to 10. There are a great variety of hooks—the Limerick, the Kirby, the sneck bend, and the round bend. The first is sometimes used for bottom-fishing, but more often for fly-fishing. The barb is so rank, however, that it often takes some time to unhook the fish. Of the other patterns it is difficult to decide which is the best. Tastes vary so much that they all have their supporters. Some like the sneck bend, and some the round bend, and some like the old Kirby—some modifications of one or the other. I generally use a hook of not quite a round bend, but with the point deflected to the side a little (not too much), and bent inwards the least trifle in the world; and, added to this, I do not hold with the shank being too short. It is a great fault.

Having now given an account of general bottom-fishing, I shall proceed to treat of the various fish taken by this means in order, with the plans and baits employed in capturing them, beginning with the easiest of the angler's pursuits, and so working my way through all grades until the proud position of M.A.-ship, or, as the old joke has it, of Senior Angler is reached.

THE GUDGEON (*Gobio fluviatilis.*)

The gudgeon is gregarious, and swims in large shoals. It is a lively little fish, and a very sharp biter, and when the fish are feeding well, it is no very uncommon thing to take from five to six, or even seven dozen in one pitch. The gudgeon spawns on the gravel in shallows and rapids in May. The ova soon hatch, the young fry grow rapidly, and by August they have usually attained the length of an inch. A gudgeon of six inches is a good size, of seven of unusual size, but they seldom attain to eight. Gudgeon bite best in clear water and warm weather in moderately rapid streams, where the water ranges from eighteen inches to three feet in depth. In order to attract them it is necessary to rake up the gravel so as to cause a thick water. The gudgeon immediately flock to the spot in order to feed upon the small insects and worms which are thus exposed. For this purpose a heavy iron rake, with a long handle, is used. The angler then fishes over the raked spot, his bait just tripping over the bottom. A light cork float and a No. 10 hook are advisable: the gudgeon feeds upon gentles, or any small grubs, and worms; but nothing can compare in point of attraction to a small fragment of red worm, or, as it is called on the Trent, the cockspur. This they keep on biting at until hardly a scrap is left, and often ten or a dozen fish may be taken with the same worm. So bold is the bite that the float plumps down under water, and the fisherman has little more to do than to pull up, no matter how, to catch the fish, though a sharp upward stroke of the rod, the wrist and forearm being suddenly jerked up to produce it, is desirable. The elbow should be kept close to the side, and the rod held lightly in the hand. For the reason that the fish require so little skill to take them, gudgeon-fishing has always been a favourite pursuit with the fair sex. I feel that I might be sarcastic here, and draw morals of divers kinds. But I refrain, for I have enjoyed many a day's gudgeon-fishing in the fairest of fair company under such circumstances, and I am grateful even for the recollection; and let me tell you, young fisherman, that it is a mighty dangerous occupation to your peace of mind. To the angler of maturer years gudgeon-fishing on the bosom of old Thames, with a chosen friend, who is lively, philosophical, contemplative, or convivial as the humour changes, a cold pigeon-pie, a bottle of sparkling sherry, unlimited seltzer cooling in the well, a fine warm day, and a case of fragrant Cabanas, is not to be despised by any means. But abler pens than mine have sung the praises of gudgeon-fishing ; and who that is an enthusiastic Thames fisher does not remember the greatest of our modern humorist's lyric, with its score of rhymes to " Ditton " ? But *revenons á nos goujons*. When the fish begin to slacken in their biting, the rake must be used again, and they will renew their attentions ; sometimes even a third raking will answer if the fish round the spot are very plentiful, but more often two applications of the rake will be found sufficient.

Gudgeon, however, not only multiply in running streams, they thrive well in ponds. I once threw the contents of my bait-can into a dirty horse-pond, and the gudgeons bred in it and did well there, and lived in it for years, furnishing me with bait upon emergencies. Indeed, the water must be very foul indeed which a gudgeon will not be able to exist in.

The gudgeon is a most agreeable acquaintance at the breakfast table. There is a crispness and piquancy about his discussion, when duly fried and neatly served, which is highly gratifying.

While fishing for him, the young angler is apt to pull up a fish somewhat similar in appearance at the first glance, and this is

THE POPE OR RUFFE (*Acerina cernua*)

The pope is of the perch family, having the distinctive sharp spinous dorsal fin of the perch. It spawns in April, depositing its spawn among the roots and fibres of water plants. It takes freely the same baits as the gudgeon, and should there be a deepish slack eddy by the side of your gudgeon swim, and near weeds or boughs, there you will most probably take pope. It is hardly worth notice for the table, but what little flesh there is on it is fully as sweet and palatable as that of the gudgeon. It bites quite as boldly as the gudgeon, and forms a desirable prey for the young angler. It is said to have been quite unknown to the ancients, and was first discovered in England by the learned Dr. Caius, the founder of Caius College, Cambridge, who flourished about the middle of the sixteenth century, being physician to Edward VI and the Queens Mary and Elizabeth.*

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* The pope is an Arctic survival in British waters. In Siberia it attains a length of 18 inches, and a weight of 1½ lb.—Ed.

THE BLEAK (*Cyprinus alburnus*)

is a lively, gregarious little fish, and is very delicate eating when cooked in the way in which sprats are commonly cooked, which fish it rather resembles in appearance. It abounds in many rivers, and, though not much of a quarry for the angler, may be taken by whipping with a gentle or a small fly on the top of the water, or by using a light quill float, with a scrap of worm or a gentle on a small hook, some ten or fifteen inches under the surface. The neighbourhood of an outflowing drain is always a favourite spot for bleak, and the more filth that exudes from it the more attractive it is. Quick striking must be the order of the day, as they are very sharp and active. The bleak, from its brightness, makes an attractive bait to spin with for trout and jack, but it is tender on the hooks, and soon wears out. The scales formerly fetched a high price from the artificial pearl-makers, for the nacre on them. It spawns usually in the month of May. It delights in warm summer weather, when the surface of the water is often dotted all over with their risings. In winter bleak do not show so much, but get nearer the bottom, and are much less active.

THE ROACH (*Alburrus lucidus*)

The roach is a gregarious fish, abounding in many of our rivers, ponds, and lakes. It feeds upon weeds, worms, grubs, flies, and insects of various kinds, while it will also feed greedily upon farinaceous matters, as bread, bran, boiled wheat, grains, etc. Roach spawn about the end of May, after which they shelter a good deal in deep holes, or in the thick weed, living upon the weed and the insects found among it, until the weeds begin to turn sour with the earlier frosts of autumn, when they take rather more to the open streams. At this time, when, as it is termed, " the weed is out of them," they are in their very best condition, the slimy coat they wore among the weeds being off them, and their scales hard and bright as silver, and the fins clear and rosy. Roach seldom much exceed two pounds in weight in any of the waters about London. They have been taken of three pounds weight in waters which are not often fished, and Pennant mentions one of five pounds ; but a roach of two and a half pounds would be held by any London angler—and they are the chief and best roach-fishers—to be a most unusual prize; for what the trout is to the country gentleman the roach is to the Londoner; and the Thames, Lea, and Colne are eagerly sought by shoals of roach-fishers every day in the week from June to December, and of late years I am sorry to say almost until June again, and under such wholesale, regular, and systematic persecution, there is no doubt but that the stock of *good* roach must diminish.* The process, however, can hardly be other than a slow one when we consider the large roe and the wonderful fecundity of the roach. I am not in possession of any actual facts proven by experiment as regards the rate of growth of the roach, but I should conceive a half pound roach, under a fair proportion of feeding, etc., to be a fourth year's fish; and, in the interests of angling, none but half-pound fish or thereabouts should be taken. Roach-fishing is very pretty sport, requiring the exercise of much skill, patience, quickness of apprehension, and ingenuity, combined with a thorough knowledge of the habits of the fish. No greater mistake can be made than to fancy the roach is a simple fish. When he is half-starved, and seldom fished for, he is no doubt easy to capture. When about to spawn or just spent he loses much of his caution and shyness; but when he is well fed, in high condition, and sees many rods, he becomes amazingly shy of the hook. I am the tenant of a portion of a river in which thousands of splendid roach may be seen in great shoals. I have tried them by every conceivable kind of baiting for two or three years, both in fair and foul weather and fair and foul water, but I have never succeeded in taking more than three or four at the same time, and those I took one evening with very fine Nottingham tackle, striking them at least fifty yards off. I have also had some of the best roach-fishers in London down to try them, and they have had no better success. Sometimes in dirty water late in the winter a few good takes of splendid fish are made, but at all other times the roach are exceedingly wary. But this is rather an exceptional case; and, seated on a stump, under the shade of an old pollard willow, by some deep, quiet hole on the Lea or Colne, the fisherman may enjoy agreeable sport, and while watching his float with a mundane eye to the main chance, to dream or moralise to his heart's content, as did dear old Father Izaak in days of yore. Here is the eddy *he* loved, and there the bunch of water flags, and yonder the honeysuckle hedge, but little changed these two hundred years or so.

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* Since this was written the Freshwater Fisheries Act, 1878, established a close time, 15th March till 15th June, both inclusive, for all kinds of freshwater fish not of the salmon order, with exception in regard to certain districts.—Ed.

The means usually pursued in roach-fishing have already been described in bank and punt-fishing. The rods and tackles requisite in the sport are such as are there set down. The hook, if the water be full and the fish biting freely, should be a No. 9, to carry two gentles. If the water be very clear, and the fish shy, a No. 10 or 11 hook, to take only one gentle, will be found preferable. Two dead gentles jammed together in the fashion in which the hook is usually baited, are not a common spectacle to the fish when the angler is using gentles as ground-bait, and they are therefore rather liable to challenge suspicion than otherwise. In roach-fishing, it is very customary with some anglers to use the short-shanked hooks I have spoken of previously; but they are bad hooks for striking, and do not strike true on the point of the hook. Let the angler take one, fix the point of the hook against any substance, and then pull the gut, and see what ensues. Let him note the angle formed by the hook and gut, and indirect action of the point, and he will recognise the justice of my remark. By lengthening the shank slightly, the evil is mitigated.

In fishing with gentles, it is very common to find the gentles blown by the fish up the shank of the hook, and often an inch or two up the gut. Now, when you are using very fine gut, to have to tear the gentle off it time after time is calculated to wear and fray the gut, which, as it is often drawn gut, is especially liable to such injury; and when one is using two gentles, the one blown up is usually comparatively uninjured, and might be drawn back on the hook with advantage, the gentle at the point being the only one renewed. A good deal of trouble in rebaiting is thus often saved, which in very cold weather, and when the fish are biting rapidly, is very desirable. To facilitate the return of the gentle, it is advisable to take two or three turns of the trying silk on the gut above the shank, and this also preserves the gut at the very point it is most liable to injury. The constant wear and tear of the binding in roach hooks, renders it necessary that the tying should be well varnished, and that the hooks should be prepared some time before use, that the varnish may be thoroughly dry, hard, and impenetrable. Always use the very neatest tackle which you can afford for roach. Let your gut be of the finest, and delicately stained of a pale olive-green weed colour, your shot be as unobtrusive, and the float as light as possible. Some prefer single hair, and I do not object to it if they *do* prefer it; but I think it should be used where you only expect to take roach, as in dull streams and eddies, or when bank-fishing. In a sharp stream, and from a punt, or where you may expect barbel, I do not recommend it. It may show sport, but to waste half an hour over a one-pound barbel, when the roach are well on the feed, does not suit my views; while a small fish will often snap the hair in the strike when aided by the length of line, the weight of tackle, and a sharp stream.

The best hook-baits for roach are, as I have intimated, first, maggots, or gentles as they are more commonly called by metropolitan anglers. Those blown on bullock's liver, which are shiny and yellow, are the best by far. When using them, the roach, not being hungry, often want a little coaxing or variety. When you think this is the case, instead of two gentles use one, and point your hook with a chrysalis. But you must strike lightly when fishing with chrysalis, or you will have to bait afresh every swim. It will frequently happen, too, when fishing with gentles, that the roach are shy, and will keep on biting and nibbling, and a scene of pricking, losing, scratching, and abortive striking takes place, in which your two gentles become time after time mere transparent skins, and your fish do not come to hand. When this is the case, try a small No. 11 hook, just taking enough of the skin on the hook to attach the gentle to the hook without killing it (hook on by the thick skin at the butt or thick end of the gentle), and then let it down the swim twirling about *alive*, and you will often get ten or a dozen good fish if you do not lose one or two—before they find out their mistake; perhaps then they will take to pulling your gentle off, or, as before, squeezing out the intestines, carefully avoiding the hook meanwhile. Then must you string the gentle on to the hook bodily, passing the hook into the thick end, and the point coming out at the small end or head, and thus you may delude a few more. Oft-times, too, when they find that the ground-bait is rather a dangerous neighbourhood, or when perhaps they may see the punt too clearly, they will remain below the ground-bait, catching the atoms as they sail by. The best fish nearly always do this, and rest quite at the end of the swim. Then cast your ground-bait a good way off down the swim. Let out a few yards extra of line and fish farther off, and you will often get sport in that way when the fish will scarcely bite at all close to the boat. All these dodges and any more which may suggest themselves to the angler, should be employed when the fish are biting shyly. A change of bait will often procure a fish or two, and should never be neglected. In fact, a judicious changing backwards and forwards in this respect will be found highly necessary to tickle the jaded appetites of the well-fed aldermanic roach, and by one means or the other something like a take may generally be made, *provided the fish are there.** Many of the above plans, it will be seen, are equally feasible in bank-fishing.

The following plan is an ingenious one ; it was communicated to me by an old roach-fisher who declared it to be a great patent. I have never tried it myself, but the angler can do so if he chooses. It often happens that when the water is clear and low the fish are difficult to attract, whereas, if you could discolour the water a little, you would not only coax the fish to come to your swim, but would induce them to take well. The readiest means, it would seem, is a rake, but however attractive this may be to small fry, it does not suit good roach. Get a tube shaped like a trumpet or a post-horn, or get a common funnel with a large tube. Then get three or four lengths of zinc or tin pipe, which will fit into each other in joints like ferrules, of a foot or eighteen inches each in length ; screw on a sufficient number of these to reach the bottom of the water ; tie a stone or weight on to the small end, sufficient to sink it to the bottom, and keep it steady ; then thrust it overboard to the bottom of the water, the funnel remaining above the water, and handy to you. Have a tub near, in which mix up some clay or mould with bran and plenty of water. Stir it up until it becomes thick slush. Then take a half-pint mug full of this liquid and pour it into the funnel. This rises slowly from the lower end of the tube at the bottom of the water, and thickens it for two or three minutes, quite sufficiently to attract the fish and set them biting, while it does not satisfy their hunger like ground-bait. Dropping your hook-bait into the muddy stream, let it follow it down, and you will be likely to get a bite or two. You can renew the colouring matter about every quarter of an hour, and, said my informant, "no matter how low or bright the water, you will get sport when none of the boats or fishermen near you will perhaps be able to get any."

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* Anyone can catch *some* roach when the big fellows are sucking down the float quietly at every swim, just under the rod-point, and when you have nothing to do but to strike and hook a fish ; but the artist in roach-fishing alone will make a fair bag on an indifferent day. The above hints are, of course, unnecessary save for the tyro.—F. F.

Among other baits much favoured by roach are creed malt and boiled wheat; it must be boiled until it cracks, which takes a couple of hours. Green wheat in the milky state is a very good bait in some places; it lasts but a short time, however. Pearl barley, which answers the same purpose, is a favourite bait; it should be boiled till soft, but not too soft. It sticks on the hooks nearly as well as gentles. Plain paste (see bait table) is an excellent bait for roach, and usually comes into favour as gentles go out. A piece of the size of a big pea should be put on the hook, and the angler should be careful not to strike too violently, or he will constantly have to renew his bait. Some mix a little wool with the paste to make it stay better on the hook, and it answers the purpose pretty well. It is best used in eddies and slow streams. The red worm is a tolerably good bait also for roach, particularly in thick water, where the fish may have been feeding on worms, and the large roach will often take the tail of a lob worm sufficiently ravenously. Caddis bait is also a favourite bait with roach, but it is a bad substitute for gentles. The diminutive bloodworm, found in the muddy deposit at the bottom of stagnant waters, is held to be a great attraction for roach, but it requires a fine hook and great care to bait it well.

SINKING AND DRAWING

Sinking and drawing with a large blow-fly on a small hook, and a single large shot, is a killing way in warm weather. It is, too, a scientific way, as the angler has to trust a good deal to the sense of feeling for knowing when he has a bite, as no float is used and the bait is often several inches under water. The method is to let out some ten or twelve yards of light silk line, at the end of which is some six feet of fine gut with a small hook baited with a large blow-fly or a wasp-grub, or even a gentle may be used in the same way, and about a foot above this a shot or two, according to the strength of the stream. Let the bait sink almost to mid-water by dropping the point of the rod, and then draw it to the top by raising the point, and so keep on falling and raising the point of the rod alternately, gradually following your bait down-stream: strike gently but quickly at the least symptom of a bite or a touch. In this way you also kill dace and sometimes perch, and occasionally a trout. You may also take roach, and good ones by fly-fishing. Indeed, in some waters, particularly where bottom-fishing is difficult to follow by reason of weeds, shallows, etc., excellent sport may be had with the artificial fly. An imitation of a bluebottle or a common red or black palmer, with a pair of wings of starling feather added to it, is a good fly. Dress it on a No. 8 hook. It will be all the more attractive if the hook be pointed with a gentle or a little bit of stringy bacon skin of the size of a gentle. In default of this, a small piece of white kid or wash-leather does well. As a rule, roach do not take fly well upon the Thames, though I have seen them at special times feeding voraciously on flies. One warm day, in October, 1860, the ant fly was swarming in the air, and the water was thronged with it. I was fishing at Hampton, and every roach in the river was feeding most greedily on it, and on enquiry I found that the same thing had been noticed at Twickenham and elsewhere. As the method is exceptional there are no rules for the choice of a fly, but if the roach are rising freely it will be desirable to find out what they are rising at and to use that fly; in default of this, the angler may whip with a gentle if the fish are inclined to rise well, and he will be pretty sure to get good sport.

Large roach are often taken also with the lob worm when barbel-fishing. The ground-baits for roach are as various as the hook-baits. In still streams and quiet eddies these should be scattered loosely in, without any admixture of clay or any sinking matter, but the angler in doing so must always calculate whereabouts his bait is likely to ground, and fish there; for if he baits in one place, and fishes a few yards off it, his ground-bait will do him more harm than no bait at all would. *Never overbait roach;* a very little bait will draw them together, and a few scraps occasionally will be all that is necessary to keep them on the watch. And therefore a little bait scattered over a space where all can get at it is better than a mass where only two or three can plunge their noses into it and succeed in gorging themselves. There is no plan so absurd, so literally destructive of sport, as that pursued by the majority of Thames fishermen, with their huge piles of puddings of clay, bran, gentles, greaves, bread, and what not; an occasional ball or two mixed up with clay, of about the size of a plum, is useful to keep the ground baited; but this is a very different thing from casting in five or ten at a time, as big as large oranges.

For casting in loose, in eddies, either gentles, scalded greaves, or chopped worms, may be used; these baits are likely to attract barbel to the swim also; or any of the above-named hook-baits, as bran (wetted) with ground barley, boiled wheat, grains, rice boiled, or baker's raspings. Some anglers use bread, but I cannot bring myself to like this plan; it goes entirely against my grain to take a half-quartern loaf and cast if to the fishes; it smacks too much of "taking the children's bread and casting it to the dogs," and seems to me too wholesale a waste. When used, it is soaked and squeezed up with the bran; but a handful or two of refuse rice is a much better and handier bait. It is a very good plan to damp the bran slightly, and mixing with a handful or two of pollard or meal and a little rice, to squeeze it, and work it lightly together over a small pebble into balls about the size of large plums. This can be used instead of the clay bait, when the stream is only moderately rapid; it breaks directly it touches the bottom, and scatters all over the swim; but as it is soon swept away, a small ball now and then of clay, as recommended above, is advisable. If fishing with paste, a few pellets thrown in now and then near the float, will be found advisable. Other anglers use bullock's brains as a ground-bait; but as it seems that it is necessary to chew them raw—a process my gorge rises at the thought of—I have never tried them. In the midland counties, however, particularly on the Trent, the bait is in great request, and is called by anglers "pith." But if gentles, greaves, worms, pearl barley, rice, and paste fail, the angler may very reasonably give up fishing. Although roach are not supposed to be fish-eaters, I have often seen and heard of their running at and taking a spinning bait; but I look upon such facts as mere aberrations.

THE RUDD (*Leuciscus Erythrophthalmus*)

is a widely distributed fish, being found in many lakes, ponds, and rivers throughout the kingdom. The Norfolk Broads contain great quantities of them, as do some of the Irish lakes. I have taken large numbers in Osterly Park. They are a somewhat similar fish to the roach, though of a more coppery tinge, and of a rather deeper and shorter make. They seldom exceed one pound and a half in weight, and are not common of that size.* For all angling purposes, the directions given for roach answer for the rudd equally. In the Thames the two fish are often caught in the same swim, and confounded together. "What a short, thick roach!" the angler will sometimes observe, as he drops it into the well. They spawn in April, or early in May, and are said to be a better fish for the table than roach.

THE DACE (*Leuciscus vulgaris*)

The dace is an active and prolific little fish, slender and graceful in its proportions. It seldom exceeds a pound in weight, and in few rivers in England is it even taken up to that weight; in the Thames a dace of half a pound is unusually large, though I once remember taking thirteen that weighed seven pounds, my companion having previously taken his share from the basket (which was the product of our joint efforts), which consisted of a like number as fine or finer; all these fish were taken with the tail of the lob worm when we had baited for barbel. Never before or since, through many long years' experience, have I seen such a take of dace on the Thames, nor one at all approaching it for average size. In the Colne, and the Hampshire Avon, and the Usk, however, I have often seen dace that would weigh full three-quarters of a pound, and even more. The dace is gregarious, and spawns in May or June, and gets into fair condition again by the middle of July. By August they get on the shallows, where they may be taken in large numbers, by whipping with almost any small fly, or even with a single gentle; some people, to make the fly more attractive, point the hook with a gentle; others, as I have recommended in roach-fishing, use a small shred of kid or wash-leather. I have found the inner rind of a scrap of stringy bacon answer the purpose better perhaps than either, being a kind of compromise between the two; that is, something to taste, and not liable to be whipped off. A short stiff rod (about eight feet long) is the best for this work. The line should not be too long, or it is not manageable, as quick striking is the order of the day with this very nimble fish. The flies should always be dressed upon as large hooks as the angler can afford to dress them on, as the fish rising often in very sharp streams are apt to break off from any slight hold. In the eddies of a sharpish stream, over a shallow, by the side of a bank of weeds is a sure find for them. Choose for your sport a day that is cloudy and warm, and without much wind; as if there be much wind you cannot see the rises, and when you *feel* them it is too late to strike dace, as they reject the fly with great quickness; hence the use of the gentle, or bacon rind, to make them retain their hold. They are very quick of sight, and on a too sunny day the angler will experience the disappointment of seeing fish after fish, and often two or three at a time, follow his fly for yards without taking it; when this is the case, try a smaller fly and finer tackle, and don't forget the bacon or gentle.

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* I am informed on good authority that rudd are frequently taken at Slapton weighing 2 lb. "Big rudd," writes Mr. A. W. Hill, "won't take fly, but are taken by keeping well out of sight and casting a bit of breadcrust like a fly and letting it float."—Ed.

All the methods, and arts, and tackle, recommended for catching roach, are applicable to dace, and the hooks are of a similar size, only as the dace is rather more carnivorous, the angler will find worms, greaves, and gentles preferable to farinaceous food; and although roach and dace for the most part bite in the same swims, yet, if the angler desires more particularly to fish for dace, he must choose a rather swifter and heavier swim; dace bite rather quicker and sharper than roach, and the slow suck down, that so often betrays a good roach, is not so common in dace-fishing. One good plan of attracting small dace is to rake the bottom, as in gudgeon-fishing, when little or no ground-bait will be needed.

When fly-fishing for dace, be cautious and quiet, as they are easily alarmed, and a slight wave, or unusual ripple on the water, will instantly stop their rising. There is no bait so good for taking dace as a red worm, or the tail of a small lob worm; next to that, I give the preference to gentles and greaves.

Dace are a troublesome fish to get into a trout stream, as their habits and food being similar to that of the trout, they take much of the food from the trout, and being a restless hardy fish, and, moreover, in the height of condition when the trout are spawning, they pick up a vast quantity of the eggs shed by the trout, and owing to these and other causes they soon considerably outnumber and override the trout.

The greatest number of dace I ever saw together was in the pools in the river Usk, a mile or two below Brecon. The pools were alive with them, and they ran very large; I saw some nearly a pound in weight. They were, too, in this water, but bad risers, and were not much thinned by the fly, and bait-fishing not being allowed, they had it all their own way, and the trout evidently suffered in proportion to their increase.

They are a delicate fish to eat when in good order, and should be broiled dry, a slice of butter being then allowed to melt upon them. They make one of the most valuable spinning baits for jack and trout which the angler can obtain, being bright and round, and reasonably tough on the hooks.

The metropolitan angler finds excellent dace-fishing, particularly with the fly, on the various shallows between Isleworth and Teddington Lock. It will be found advisable to pay some attention to the particular fly on the water; though small red and black palmers will seldom fail to kill. Still there are times when other flies will kill better, and it is advisable to note this. I have had good sport with duns of all kinds, ant flies, the water-cricket, the cinnamon, etc.

THE CHUB (*Leuciscus cephalus*)

The chub is a well-shaped, handsome-looking member of the carp tribe; but his value for the table much belies his appearance, his flesh being watery, coarse, and tasteless. The French are said to call him "un vilain," from the difficulty they experience in rendering him toothsome, and it seems reasonable that the fish, which even French cookery rejects as worthless, should be held by others in the very lowest estimation; and yet he may be made eatable. One of the best recipes for this purpose is the well-known one in Izaak Walton. Moreover, small chub of some half-pound weight, if crimped and fried dry, are by no means so bad as above represented, and will "pleasure" others than "*poor* bodies." But I must reiterate that which he states with respect to chub, viz. that they must be cooked as soon as caught, for if kept even for the night they are worthless.

The chub spawns early in May, and not uncommonly reaches the weight of six or seven pounds, though seldom taken over that weight. Yarrell says he cannot find one recorded of over five pounds weight, but I have *seen* them of six pounds in the Thames, and have heard of them of seven or eight pounds. The chub is rather an omnivorous fish, and may be taken in almost any way ; he will rise freely at a fly, will run equally at a spinning-bait,* or a live minnow ; at slugs, worms, snails, frogs, greaves, pastes, and particularly cheese, he is a perfect glutton.

About June chub go upon the shallows to clean themselves ; the tail of a pool, where there is a sharpish stream, is a favourite place for them. Here they may be taken in some good numbers with a good rough palmer or alder fly, provided the angler gives them a rest for every two or three fish which he takes, as they are a very shy fish, and easily alarmed. Later on, as the season gets warmer, they retire to deep holes, or under banks, large stumps, roots, old campshots, or beneath overhanging boughs ; these last are usually a sure find, for there they lie on the watch for any insect that may drop from the branches above into their ever-ready jaws ; and nothing living that is small enough comes amiss to them, for chub will take cockchafers, humblebees, wasps, palmers, and caterpillars of all kinds—beetles, slugs, and snails most ravenously. I know of no pleasanter way of fishing for chub, on a warm summer evening, than drifting quietly along just within a long cast of the boughs, having on for a bait a large rough red or black palmer, or, if they rise not well to these, an imitation humblebee, of which a cut may be seen in Plate IX, Fig. 4. page 211, if the fish are inclined to rise at all, one of these lures will seldom fail to kill ; the alder, or the cinnamon, or any large trout fly will also kill well, and casting in as far under the boughs as may be practicable. When the chub rises to the fly, the angler must be a bungler indeed who neglects to stick his hook into his huge leathern portmanteau of a mouth. He fights well for a minute, but does not last, for after his first run he is soon subdued. The above is the pleasantest way of fishing for chub, but not the most killing, particularly for large fish. A better plan is to use a stiff double-handed fly rod and a single perch hook ; on this stick the head of a lob worm, or a lump of greaves, or a bunch of gentles, and cast it like a fly towards the boughs, bank, or campshot, and let it sink to mid-water, working it towards you, and at

* I have frequently, when spinning for trout, taken chub of four pounds weight and upwards, to my considerable disgust and disappointment ; and how I have anathematised them for taking the salmon fly, just when some salmon has shown himself on the Wye, where they abound, I hardly like to recall.—F. F.

the slightest symptom of a touch strike smartly ; indeed, the bait should never be drawn out of the water to repeat the throw without a strike ; by this means both perch and trout may often be taken. It is the best way of taking good chub, combined with exercise and motion, and is pleasanter than the practice of daping, or float-fishing. With regard to the former, no better instructions have ever been given than those of Izaak Walton. My advice on this point is brief. Having found out the holes and spots where the chub are, and having decided how they can be fished, let the angler first see that his rod and line are all in proper trim, and his hook carefully baited.* The spot must then be approached with the utmost caution ; he must keep out of sight behind some bush or tree, on his hands and knees if need be. If he cannot accomplish this he must do the best he can, and having reached the spot he intends to fish from, he must try perfect quiet, and give the fish time to recover from the alarm he has thrown them into. Next, protruding his rod at an angle of 45° over the water, with as little flourish or disturbance as possible, he may allow the baited hook to fall from the hand in which he has held it, so that it may hang some six or eight inches from the water ; gradually and very gently he may move the point of the rod over the spot where the fish are thickest ; having arrived so far, he may drop his bait smartly on the surface of the water. If the chub rises and gobbles it down directly (as, if the angler has conducted his operations properly, will most likely be the case) he must not strike immediately, or the fish will splash upon the top of the water, and so disturb every chub within yards of the spot. But he must allow the fish to turn his head well down, and then give him a gentle pull (not a sharp strike), and put a strong persuasive drag on in order to lead him away from the spot, so that he may not by flying about all over the hole disturb the others, for, if he is permitted to do so, the angler will barely take another fish in the hole, whereas by conducting his measures properly he may take three or four or more. Having landed his fish with as little noise as possible, he must bait the hook, and swing it out over the hole again, and there let it hang for a few minutes previous to dropping it on the surface, in order that the chub may thoroughly recover their equanimity. When the fish become quite disturbed, the angler should leave the spot, casting in a handful of ground-bait ere he goes. No good will be done by his continuing to fish it, for the chub will not come on the feed again unless left to themselves for an hour or more, when he may come back and renew his attentions with success.

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* Before the angler ever attempts to fish any special hole, swim, pitch, or cast, let him study the spot, and settle in his own mind how it can best be fished to advantage ; how this bough or that obstruction, may be avoided ; how the wind acts with reference to them ; how an eddy may be used or avoided, and how the spot can be approached best without his being seen or heard. By so doing, in many cases, he will avoid the disappointment so often consequent upon hastiness ; and the practice of such consideration will, in time, so improve his judgment and quickness that this portion of his art will appear almost like intuition to the less considerate angler.—F. F.

The best baits for daping are cockchafer, humblebee, grasshopper, large flies of various kinds, and the young frog. Flies should be hooked on sideways through the thorax, and not from head to tail, and as little line as possible should rest on the water when daping with them. Fishing with the young frog is a very killing method of fishing for chub. The following method I have from Mr. Rolfe, the well-known fish artist, and by this means almost any spot can easily be fished. The worst things one has to contend with in daping are the branches and foliage on the wooded spots where this kind of angling is chiefly followed; the difficulty being to get the line and hook out over the water without entangling. To do this, various expedients have been adopted—twisting the line round the top of the rod, and then poking it through holes in the bushes over the water, and there untwisting it by turning the rod round like a mop handle the reverse way to the twist. But this is tedious, and not always certain. Mr. Rolfe's plan is far better. Use a long, light, and stiffish rod with upright rings, a very fine soft silk Nottingham line; have a perch hook on about a foot of fine gut for the line, and a bullet of sufficient weight made fast at the join between the foot of gut and the silk line. Take a small lively frog (you can get any number of them collected by country lads at the right period of the year). Hook a very little bit of the skin of the frog's back on the bend of the hook (just enough to secure without damaging him), as Izaak sayeth, "Treat him as if you loved him," though it may be a queer method of expressing one's sentiments. Now, having wound all the line up on your reel until the bullet touches the eye of the rod-top, check the line so as to keep it there. You have then but the foot of gut with the hook and frog hanging from the point, and there are very few holes amongst foliage, where you may desire to fish, through which this cannot easily be passed without catching in any twigs. Having passed it through, and the rod-point being over the spot you want to fish, release the line, and the weight of the bullet will draw it out directly. As the frog glides down towards the surface, ease the line slowly, as it is not desirous to plump him or the bullet into the water, but to keep him on the surface, so that not an inch of the line should touch the water, but the frog should just rest, as it were, upon the surface, the bullet being a foot above him and quite out of the water, of course. The moment the frog touches the water, he will begin to strike out, and in his ineffective attempts to swim away he will kick up such an attractive bobbery on the top of the water that all the chubs within reasonable range will come to see what the disturbance is, and to a certainty they will think it necessary to take the disturber of the peace into custody.

Tastes differ. Some like frogs, and some cockchafers and some humblebees. I have another friend who is a very successful angler for large chub on the Thames, and who vows that no respectable chub is seen out after the grey of the morning. He then goes out, and rows very gently up-stream as far away from the spots he intends to fish as possible, and drops down the river with the most intense caution, with muffled rowlocks and carpet slippers, like a housebreaker, grasping his jemmy or fishing-rod, and with hardly a breath or motion. He knows the exact spots, calculates his distance nicely, and casts an artificial cockchafer into the holes, the hook being attractively garnished with two or three gentles, which give the cockchafer the savoury appearance of having had his intestines squeezed out, a state of things which he declares that no chub can resist; and he certainly does catch some very large chub where no one would expect them. He says, however, that so timid are the larger chub that at the slightest disturbance they return to their holes; the slightest noise or motion is fatal, and that, if he finds a boat even has gone blundering up the river before him, he does not think it worth while to go out.

One of the most common and general ways of fishing for chub is with float and ground-bait; the best baits to use thus for chub are greaves and cheese. There is a coarse common kind of cheese made in the north and in Wales for about 2d. per pound, which is suitable for this purpose.* The greaves should be broken up and scalded; the cheese cut to the size of gooseberries.

As chub are rather shy, the angler, particularly if he is in a punt or boat, must fish for them some distance from him, and he must, therefore, when throwing in his bait, calculate whereabouts it will ground or be dispersed on the bottom rather nicely, because over that part of the swim he must fish the most carefully. This should not be nearer to him than ten yards, and from twelve to twenty will be better. Use Nottingham tackle, which will be described presently. The float, of course, must suit the stream. The hook, if greaves or cheese be used, should be a small triangle, and the depth plumbed so that the bait may travel naturally along the bottom without dragging too much. The Nottingham tackle used in "light corking" will be about the tackle for this purpose. The tackle dropped in, and the swim commenced, the rod is held almost upright, the point inclining a little forward. If the weight of the stream does not take the line out fast enough, it must be handed off the reel. The great object is not to check the line, but to let the bait travel steadily onward. Presently the float disappears and the angler must strike smartly and firmly (as he may have a good length of line to lift off the water) back over his right shoulder. If he has hooked his fish, he then winds steadily on him until he winds him up into the swim under the point of the rod, when, if he has been brought up from any distance, he is usually fit for the landing-net. In this kind of fishing, which is called "traveller" fishing (the float being the traveller), a long swim is made if the bottom admits it, and it is common enough to strike fish forty or even fifty yards off. Many sorts of fish are caught in this way, as I shall show.

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* It is long since cheese of any kind could be had at that figure!—Ed.

Chub are often, too, caught when float-fishing in the ordinary roach and dace style, either from punt or bank, mostly, however, at the extreme end of the swim, and if there be a chub about, a swim of some five or ten yards extra will often be rewarded with a good one. Many trout and even salmon rivers abound in chub, as the Welsh Wye and Irvon, where they are a positive nuisance to the angler, and take the place and food of better fish. I once, when fishing the Wye with a very light eleven-foot trout rod, had two of these brutes on at the same time of about two pounds each, and no landing-net. I was fishing a very promising run of trout and grayling water, and, to my disgust, they quite spoiled all chance of sport in it. They are very abundant also in the Kennet, Windrush, and many other excellent trout streams, which suffer severely by their superabundance.

The scales of chub, as well as those of bleak, were formerly valuable for the nacre upon them to the artificial pearl-makers, but a better substitute has long rendered them valueless.

It is but seldom the angler would either spin or use a live bait for chub, as their taking it is rather the exception than the rule, though they do take both spinning and live baits at times. Besides cheese and greaves for bottom baits, chub are very partial to various grubs and caterpillars, to the black slug, to snails, gentles, and worms. The chub likes a large and fat mouthful, so that the hook may be well covered.

I always look upon the chub with somewhat of veneration; for was it not that historical chub, that chub Dagon in fact, with the white spot on his tail, that was the first fish that introduced me to old Izaak? I trow it was, and well do I remember, although so many years have passed away, how from that chub I devoured the work to the end. Venator and Auceps I cared nought for. I care nothing for them now. They were simple nuisances; they are excrescences, wens, which should be cut off. Indeed, I doubt if ever I waded through their conversations.

THE BARBEL (*Barbus vulgaris*)

So named from the barbs or wattles that depend from the sides of the mouth. It is a coarse, watery, flavourless, bony fish, and of little value for the table unless it be used as stock for fish-soup. Albeit I have seen fishermen eat them, first, however, splitting them down the back, and taking out the backbone. Barbel spawn in May or June, and get into condition about the end of July, before which time, therefore, they ought to be spared by the angler. Bottom-fishing commences on the Thames in June, and numbers of barbel are often caught in a gravid state. I have seen them captured at that time, when the spawn and milt was running from them at the slightest pressure. The barbel is gregarious, and is a widely distributed fish, being found in abundance in many of the Continental rivers. It abounds also in the Crimea. With us it is seldom found to reach above sixteen pounds in weight, and one of twelve pounds, though not very uncommon, is not taken every day. The barbel, from the size of its fins and its powerful muscles, affords great sport, the sport being much enhanced by the very fine tackle which is often employed in his capture; and a day's good barbel-fishing with fine float tackle, when the barbel are biting freely, is not to be despised, for you may sometimes have fish of eight, ten, and even twelve pounds weight upon the finest possible hook and tackle.

There are two means employed for barbel-fishing—by float-fishing and by a stationary bait kept in its place by means of a plummet; and, firstly, I shall treat of float-fishing for barbel. The barbel's powerful fins enable him to frequent the strongest and heaviest streams, and in these, if there be a ledge or a deep hole or eddy in which he can rest, there he will be found, and usually with many friends in his company. Having found out his whereabouts, the next thing is to decide upon the swim, and how to bait and fish it most advantageously. There are many places which barbel affect, and in which the largest fish will often be found, which, owing to the turbulence of the water, can only be fished with ledger tackle; but for the float choose a moderately sharp part of the stream as near the supposed hole as may conveniently be. It should have a fairly level bottom without large stones or other obstructions, and be of tolerably equable depth, with a steady current and not too much eddy or boil. If the float on the first trial be drowned or sucked under, a heavier one, with a weightier set of tackle, should be chosen. Eight or ten BB shots as sinkers will fish most streams, but the lightest tackle which the stream will carry is the best, provided the float swims easily and steadily. It is advisable that the swim should not be less than four feet in depth, nor for the convenience and comfort of the angler should it be more than from eight to ten, or the tackle will need to be heavy, and the depth will be unmanageable for comfortable fishing. Of course, I am here referring to the *choice* of a swim and to ordinarily clear water. There are plenty of cases where there is no choice, and the angler may be obliged at times to fish in fifteen or twenty feet of water. On the other hand, if the water be heavy and coloured much with rain, he will sometimes get good fishing in three or four feet. Having found out where there are barbel, and selected the swim, all that the angler has to do is to bait the stream and fish it. If, however, he does not know where there are barbel he should keep his eyes open, and mark where he sees a barbel jump; for, as they are by no means a solitary fish, he will probably there find more of them. Barbel are a very restless fish, jumping out of the water all day long, differing in this from many fish which only show themselves so in the morning and evening. It is said that they jump thus to free themselves from parasites to which they are very subject.

If the angler cannot fix upon a swim in this way, he should choose a swim such as I have described, and which ends in, or runs by the edge of, some deep hole or eddy, or where there are old piles or roots, sunken boats, or rubbish of any kind which may afford harbours for the fish. This he should bait in such fashion that some of the bait shall find its way into the hole and amongst the rubbish, and so coax the fish from their holes to look for more, even though a hook should be concealed in some of it. Failing in all these methods, he must rove for them, and this, after all, is much the pleasantest way of fishing. Coming to the river's side, he chooses a swim which appears suitable, and which he finds is tolerably level. Here he breaks up two or three worms or other bait, and throws them loosely into the water, so that they shall find the bottom all about the swim he designs to fish. Then he takes half a dozen or a dozen swims. If he catches a fish he throws in another worm or two. If the fish go on biting he keeps on fishing, now and then throwing in a worm or two to draw them together. If the place appears likely to show sport, he throws in perhaps half a dozen or a dozen worms broken up, and fishes the swim until the fish are exhausted or go off, when he seeks another swim. Should he, however, get no fish or bite in half a dozen swims he continues onward down-stream until he comes to the next most likely swim, when he tries that in like manner—never stopping longer in one swim than the fish bite.

In this method of fishing the angler must make as little disturbance on the bank as possible, or he will alarm every fish. Should he, however, know where a good store of barbel lie, having chosen the swim, he will proceed to bait it with about 1000 fresh lob or dew-worms, coming to it at least twenty hours before he intends to fish it. He breaks each worm up into about four pieces, and casts the whole into the place he intends to fish. On the Thames, in order to keep the bait from straying too far, the worms are enclosed in huge balls of clay, and the fishermen bait the night before fishing; so that when they come in the morning, less than twelve hours after, they find the fish collected together, doubtless, but gorged with the worms so profusely provided for them, and so close to the place where the punt-poles are to be driven in, and the punt or boat fixed, that the fish, startled, even if they are hungry, get shy of the boat and retire to a distance. On the Trent they do not put the bait into clay, but let it scatter down the stream ; and as they fish a long way from the stand or boat, as the case may be, the barbel are not alarmed by the proximity of the angler. Whether the angler fishes from a stand on the shore, or from a boat, the method is the same. The object is to let the hook-bait travel over the whole distance along which the ground-bait has been scattered, dragging, like the ground-bait, slowly along the bottom. (For barbel, which are a ground-routing fish, the bait should always touch the bottom.) Coming, then, to the spot which has been baited, and having determined the depth, so as to let the bait drag slightly, cast in some ten or a dozen broken worms, in order to set the fish biting again—taking care, of course, to keep the bait as much in a line as possible with the spot which you have taken the depth of. The float should be of the sort used by the Nottingham fishers, and described hereafter. The hook should be a straight round-bend worm-hook, of about No. 5 or 6, and tied upon fine but round stained gut. The nearest shot should be at least a foot or fifteen inches from the hook, or, if it be requisite that the bait should drag much, even more than that distance. The bait should be the tail of a bright-red well-scoured lob worm, neatly threaded on the hook, with barely one-third of an inch of the tail off the point of the hook, which should always be thoroughly covered and concealed in the bait. Be sure that your hook-bait is always a part of the best and liveliest worm you can select. Having baited the hook, drop it into the water, and allow it to travel onwards as described in Nottingham fishing.

Barbel are often taken with the lighter appliances used in roach-fishing, and excellent sport is thus enjoyed. Should the angler use greaves or cheese as a bait, no change in the style of fishing is needed, save that the cheese should drag on the ground as lightly as possible, or it will come off the hook.

In fishing with a stationary bait, two plans are also adopted. The first is by the use of the ledger, and the second by the clay ball. The ledger is composed of a perforated lead, usually a good-sized bullet, through which the line runs freely ; a shot being fastened on the line, about two feet above the hook, to prevent the bullet from sliding farther down towards the hook. (See Plate I, Fig. 3, p. 9.) In this tackle a flat lead is shown, but a perforated bullet can be used if preferred.

The hook for ledger-fishing is generally a size or so larger than that used for float-fishing, and is baited with a clean and lively lob worm: though greaves and even gentles are sometimes used for a change, worms are the greatest stand by. In baiting the hook, some people take off the head of the worm, if it be large, preferring only to cover the hook well. As I have said, in baiting a barbel hook generally, only the smallest portion of the tail of the worm should be allowed beyond the point of the hook. The tackle is then swung and pitched forward to the requisite distance—i.e. where the fish are supposed to be the most plentiful; and the lead is allowed to remain upon the bottom, a tight line being kept on it, so that the fisherman may just feel the lead, without lifting it at all from the bottom. The moment a bite occurs, the angler will feel it, as the line is not checked at all between the bullet and the point of the rod. At the first touch he should not strike, as the barbel nibbles a little at a stationary bait; but when he feels two or three sharp jogs at the rod-point, he may strike upwards sharply, as he has to strike the lead from the bottom, as well as to stick the hook into the fish. For the first half-second he should hold the line firmly, so as to fix the hook securely in the fish's mouth; after which he may let him run, if he be a big one, and play him to the best of his ability. The weight of the lead will help him much in tiring the fish; the hold seldom gives if the hook be of good size, as the mouth of a barbel is very leathery and tough.

I will now recommend a species of tackle for this sort of fishing, which I deem to be very superior to the single hook usually employed. One of the greatest annoyances the angler experiences in ledgering, is the constant occurrence of nibbles or short bites, at which he is often induced to strike futilely; the consequence of which being that the bait is torn or disarranged, and the hook so exposed that it becomes necessary to draw it up and bait afresh. If the fish are well-fed and shy, he will get three or four or more nibbles for one bite: and as the bait is a rather long and large one, and the hook likewise, it is useless to strike unless the fish has it in his mouth. Let the angler then adopt the Stewart worm-tackle, shown in Plate IX, Fig. 2, page 211, consisting of three small fly-hooks tied on one above the other, at intervals of half an inch or so—(the hooks should be rather larger and stouter than those used for trout)—and let him fix his worm on these and strike at every nibble, and the result will astonish your Thames puntsman considerably.

Indeed, by laying the rod down and stopping the reel, the fish as often as not will hook themselves. After catching a few fish, whether by float or ledger, if the fish go off biting a little, throw in two or three broken worms to set them on the feed again; but the angler must beware of overfeeding them while the fish are biting, as many a day's sport is spoilt by this foolish habit.

The next stationary way of fishing is by what is called the clay ball. This plan is used chiefly from a punt or boat, and is often successful in clear water; it is employed, too, chiefly when gentles or greaves are used as a bait, about half a dozen gentles or a small piece of greaves being stuck on a perch-hook. About a foot or more above the hook, a little bit of stick, of about an inch in length, is fastened cross-wise; this is for the purpose of holding the ball on the line. A lump of stiff clay, of the size of an orange, is then taken, and some gentles being enclosed in it, it is worked up with bran over the piece of stick on to the line. The gut between the ball and the hook is then wound round the ball and drawn into the clay, which is squeezed and worked over it, so that only the hook shall protrude beyond the proper end of the ball, which is then dropped to the bottom—the hook with the gentles showing just outside the ball, in the most attractive way (see Plate II. Figs. 8 and 9, p. 49). Soon the gentles in the clay force their way out, and the fish taking them from the ball, almost invariably take those on the hook also; the angler strikes when he feels a bite, which he does almost as easily as with the ledger, and the strike shakes and breaks off the clay ball, leaving the line free to play the fish. Some anglers, to make the lure more deceptive, enclose the hook in the clay ball and let the fish dig it out, but it is not necessary; a stoutish rod and tackle are required. This is a very killing plan, when the fish are biting shyly; but it cannot, of course, be practised far from the punt or boat.

The French fish somewhat in this style, using a short piece of whalebone or stick, of some eighteen inches long, instead of a rod, and playing the fish, when hooked, with the hands. The tackle they use is of course stout. They weld up horse-dung with the clay ball, which is supposed to render it more attractive. I have seen a Frenchman make some very good takes of barbel in this way, with about twelve feet of water-cord, and the half of an old umbrella rib. The slightest bite is felt very distinctly with this apparatus.

Though cheese is often used in float-fishing, it is more often so used for chub (which are particularly fond of cheese) than barbel. The cheese used on the Trent and in the midland counties is made of skim-milk, and without salt ; it must be cut into small pieces, of the size of a small gooseberry. As at every strike or two the bait requires to be renewed, when other baits can be obtained it is not much in favour. Barbel also takes greaves well, and likewise gentles ; both may be used either with float or ledger. Barbel, particularly the larger ones, may, in the spring of the year, often be taken with a spinning bait, when the angler is spinning for trout, in weir-pools and such rough water. I have known many large ones caught thus, and one of above fifteen pounds was taken years back by poor old Bill Wisdom, at Hampton Court weir on the Thames. Still they cannot be called a predaceous fish. Another bait which answers well for them is a piece of a lampern ; this is a killing bait in November, when the lamperns are running—the ground-bait being the head, blood, and intestines of lamperns. I have, with the ledger, made some very fine takes with this bait, once taking many heavy fish, my first four being five, six, eight, and twelve pounds respectively. It is not often used, however, as the barbel retires to winter-quarters at the first smart frost, and the lamperns seldom run in any numbers until a frost or two has occurred.

Fishing for barbel with fine roach tackle is, however, certainly productive of the most sport, though it is not the way to make a large bag ; for, if the angler be using fine roach tackle, and hooks a good fish, he may waste an hour or an hour and a half over him, and then lose him after all, as I have done scores of times. I always fished with single hair formerly, when float-fishing from a punt, and have killed very many barbel of four and five pounds weight with it ; but so much time and so many fish were lost at it, that I have long discontinued it. I once remember, many years since, hooking an apparently large fish on single hair, about five o'clock one November afternoon. I played him for a long time until my arm grew tired, when I handed the rod to a friend who was with me. He tired, and handed the rod to Wisdom, who in turn, gave it back to me. They both despaired of our ever killing the fish, and set his weight at a dozen pounds at least. " He'll take you all night, sir," said Wisdom. " Then I'll stop with him all night, if he does not break me, for I never have been able to kill one of these big ones with a single hair," was my reply. I had often on the same spot hooked three or four of these monsters in a morning, but I never could kill one of them. They always got away, for not far below us was a large deep hole, full of snags, old roots, and rubbish; and sooner or later they always remembered their hold there, and dashed into it headlong. Even stout ledger-tackle would hardly have held them, and that they were were very shy at, preferring the single hair greatly. This hole was about fifty yards below us, and I constantly expected the fish would make for it. However, though he made constant runs, he never cared to go above half the distance, but sheered about, now out in the stream and now in towards the campshot.* It had long been dark, and he showed no symptoms of tiring, though he had in turn tired all of us. Playing a fish in the dark is awkward work, so we hailed some men, several of whom, attracted by the report of our having hooked "a big un," were standing on the bank, to bring us a couple of lanthorns and some hot brandy and water, for it was bitterly cold; and with the aid of the lanthorns we at length managed to get the net under the fish and lifted him out. It was half-past eight when he was landed, so that I had had him on three and a half hours. And now what does the reader think he weighed? I was disgusted to find that he was only a six and a half pound fish; had I known it, I would have broken from him hours before; but it turned out that he was hooked by the back-fin, and his head being perfectly free, of course he played as heavily as a fish of double the size; and even now, remembering what the stream was, I wonder how I did succeed in landing him, as a fish so hooked, having his broadside opposed to the water, has great power of resistance. Indeed, I consider that the accomplishment was equal to killing a fish of double the weight if *fairly hooked*. The feat may sound incredible—three hours and a half with only a single horsehair, a fin-hooked fish, and a heavy stream—nevertheless it is strictly true. Had the hold been in the mouth instead of the hard, tough fin, it would probably have cut out in half the time. Now I give this piece of advice to all anglers who may be fishing from a punt with roach tackle, and who chance to hook a big one, and it is a wrinkle worth remembering. Let the punt go from the poles and get below him if you can, before he knows what he is about, so as to lead him downstream as far from his hold (and big fish always have one) as possible. For if you continue to play him about the spot where you hooked him, sooner or later he will make a bolt to his hold, when you may wish him good-bye. Therefore, get him, if possible, to travel into a strange country, when, if the bottom be fairly clear and the hold good, you may easily reduce it to a question of patience.

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* "The campshot," as it is termed on the Thames, is the wooden boarding and piling that keeps up the bank of the river. In places where it gets old and broken, it makes a famous harbour for fish.—F. F.

There is one more way of catching barbel which is not at all a general one, but it is perhaps the most sporting way of any, and certainly in the hands of an adept it is a very killing way. The plan is somewhat similar to that pursued by trout fishers with the worm in rather heavy waters. Use a large hook, or a Stewart's tackle, with three or four swan shot, or a pistol bullet, cast up-stream, and let the line come down, the lead and bait travelling naturally along the bottom, and the angler striking by feeling the bite as in worming for trout. I have heard of famous sport being gained in this way with fine tackle, and that in weather when other modes failed. I have never tried it, however.

The largest barbel I ever took or saw taken weighed a little over twelve pounds, and was taken on the ledger with lampern bait, as noted above. I have seen scores of ten and even eleven pound fish, but an honest twelve pounder is decidedly rare in the Thames. One *hears* of twelve pounders often, but one does not see them weighed, and Thames water, from its strong magnifying powers, should be used for microscopes.

CHAPTER II

BOTTOM-FISHING—*continued*

Nottingham Angling—Casting from the Reel—Daceing—Light Corking—The Slider, etc.

HAVING spoken of the Nottingham style of fishing, it may be as well here to give some idea of its method and the means and appliances required for it. In the first place, then, as to tackle, Nottingham reels differ widely from those commonly employed; they are usually made of wood and in two pieces, the barrel of the reel upon which the line is wound turning on a spindle fixed in the centre of the portion which forms the immovable part of the reel. This is contrived so that the barrel shall run with the utmost freedom at the lightest touch. These reels were invented chiefly for bank-fishing, where it is required to cast out a long line. In the fashion pursued by the fishermen who require to cast a long line on the Thames, for ledgering or spinning more particularly, the line is drawn off the reel and laid loosely in coils at the fisherman's feet, unless he be dexterous enough to gather it up in the palm of the left hand as some do, and such a practice would not do where the angler is walking along the bank of a river, or fishing haply from a withy or reed bed, for his line would be constantly catching in twigs, thorns, or particles of rubbish, and a tangle at the rings would be inevitable at every cast. Added to this, the Nottingham style of float-fishing absolutely requires the finest and lightest silk running-line made, and the line used for float-fishing is of Derby twist, scarcely coarser than common netting-silk. This would, if laid in coils, or gathered in the hand, tangle up into inextricable knots; consequently it is required to run off the reel, and with the utmost exemption from friction—for if there were much friction it would not run at all. Indeed, such is the freedom of these reels, that more often than not, in throwing a heavy tackle or letting out long line, it is requisite to moderate their pace. As the right hand is engaged in holding the rod, this is effected by the pressure of the fore-finger of the left hand on the edge or circumference of the revolving reel, according as the pace is required to be regulated, while by increasing the pressure the run of the line may be stopped altogether. If this precaution be not taken, the reel, when in full impetus, turns round so much faster than the line runs out through the rings, that it is apt to overrun the line, and a sad tangle is the result. This part of the operation requires practice—and a good deal of practice. Indeed, the whole system is much more difficult than the one in ordinary use on the Thames; but to compensate for this it is much neater and more deadly when once acquired.

The equipment of the Nottingham roach and dace-fisher will be as follows: Rod, light and springy, more flexible than a Thames punt-rod, but not so flexible as a fly-rod—almost midway between the two—about twelve or thirteen feet long, and not too heavy for one hand, and with small upright rings; a wooden reel with seventy or eighty yards of the finest Derby twist on it; a tackle of very fine gut of about four or five feet in length. The hook used is usually of the straight round-bend pattern, as the worm is more often used than any other bait; the size of course will be proportioned to the fish—that for dace, roach, etc., being equal to a No. 8. The float is composed solely of some eight inches of a good sound goose-quill, the top of which is painted to make it watertight, the bottom having a ring whipped on to it for the line to pass through. The float has no caps, as being usually attached to the running line (instead of to the tackle as in the Thames fishing) it is fastened on with two half hitches. This float carries about from four to six BB shot, the lowest of which is a good foot above the hook, so as to allow the bait to drag for some inches on the bottom without catching; the others are placed at intervals of six inches or so up the tackle. This is far better and less visible, and the line swims straighter and less wavily in the water than in the Thames plan, where the shot are all crowded together at one spot (some six or eight inches above the hook). With this tackle Trent anglers fish for roach, dace, perch, gudgeon, chub, and bream, and in a light or slow water occasionally for barbel; though for regular barbel-fishing in the heavy streams, they have a set of heavier apparatus altogether, which is called "light corking tackle," because they use for it their lightest cork float; the one above described being but a quill. The barbel float has an elongated cork body, more or less bulky, supplemented over it.

Now, one of the chief objects of a Nottingham fisherman is, not to let the fish see or hear him, and therefore he fishes as far from them as he reasonably can. Walking along the bank of a river, if he has not already selected a swim, he fixes upon a spot that looks likely to yield sport. He decides to fish at a certain distance from the shore where the stream is steady and not too strong, and the water apparently of the right depth. The first thing is to ascertain how deep it really is. A London angler would drop in a lump of lead and work it about up and down all over the swim, thereby scaring the fish to commence with. But the Nottingham man avoids this; he adjusts his float at what he supposes to be about the right depth, casts his tackle out to the exact distance from the shore at which he intends to fish, and allows his float to drift down the stream. If it floats in quite an upright position without the slightest symptom of dragging, the line is too short, and the depth below the float must be increased. If the float bob under, the shots are on the ground, and the line must be shortened below the float, and so on. Thus after four or five swims are tried he hits, by judgment, the right depth, which is for the worm to trip or drag slightly over the bottom without the shot coming in contact with it, for if the worm be properly hooked, and the bottom not foul, the tackle will nearly always carry the worm with it; should it hang, the slightest raising of the rod-point will loosen it.

Having found the depth of the water opposite to him, he proceeds to try it for the whole length of the swim—for a Nottingham angler's swim is often from a dozen to twenty yards in length; sometimes it does not commence until the float is almost that distance from him, the intermediate water being a cautionary compliment to the fish's sharpness of sight and sensation. Of course, having taken up the position or line of swim, if I may so express it, which he means his float to travel over, it is expedient to keep in that line, and it is there his ground-bait will be cast, and a few feet outside or inside of it will be so far from the fish. Considerable nicety of judgment is required to keep to this. Having now to try the swim the whole length, and having pitched his tackle out to the requisite distance, he lowers the point of the rod until it slightly inclines from the thigh towards the surface of the water, and follows the float (with neither too free nor too tight a line) with the point of the rod until the float has all the line he can give from the rod-point with it down-stream. Now comes the nicer part of the operation, and that is to give off line from the reel so lightly and continuously that it shall run freely through the rings and never check the swim of the float. This is done by keeping the reel turning fast or slow in exact accordance with the requirements of the stream, working it by quick, short touches from a left-hand finger on the edge or circumference of the wheel.

If, in going down the swim, the angler finds that it deepens off very much, or that there is too much of a rise or hill, or that the bottom is foul, he has nothing for it but to choose another swim.

Supposing that he has at length found a swim sufficiently level throughout and to his mind, he then breaks up four or five worms into very small pieces and throws them in well above the swim, calculating carefully whereabouts they are likely to ground; and here again is a point that requires practice and judgment, because if thrown in too high up the stream the bait grounds too soon, and the fish are drawn up out of the swim. If too low, then the reverse happens. The great object is to fish over your ground-bait; and for this purpose you must observe not only the latitude of the swim, but the longitude also. There is a great deal more in this than many suppose; and many an indifferent day's sport has no doubt been ascribed to any other cause but the right one, in consequence of neglect or miscalculation of this important point. Having ascertained that the bottom of the swim is tolerably clear of obstruction, and thrown in bait, etc., the angler commences his swim, but first it may happen that the swim he has selected is some two rods' lengths from the shore (roach and dace swims are seldom more, though barbel, of course, will lie in the heavier streams, more towards the centre of the river). Now, suppose the angler's swim to be, let us say, twenty feet from the spot he stands on; the length of his rod being twelve or thirteen feet, he may take nine or ten feet for the rod, or perhaps a little less; the depth of the water is five feet; so that, supposing his bait to hang at the full length of the rod—which is as much line as he will be able to swing out, and probably more—his float will be some half-way up the rod, and there will be but five feet of line to add to the ten feet allowed for the rod; but he wants to get the float five or six feet farther out—how is it to be done? The tackle is dace tackle, and is therefore too light to cast from the reel, for with such a light weight the reel would not revolve; he cannot place any line on the grass at his feet, nor allow any to hang loose from the reel, because a line so light as the fine Derby twist would inevitably twist up and tangle, and it would catch at the first ring; so, to overcome all these difficulties, he with the left hand takes hold of the running line above the first rod-ring, draws as much as he requires off the reel, and holds it away from his left side (farther from or nearer to his body as the case may require), thus keeping the spare line that is to run through the rings straight and tight, so that it cannot tangle. While doing this he will find it necessary to hold the rod close to the reel, so that the hand which holds it may be pressed against the reel to prevent it from turning round and loosening the line. Then poising the rod clear of his body on the right side, he gives his bait and tackle the requisite swing towards the point he desires to reach; as he makes the swing he relinquishes his hold on the line in his left hand, and the spare line goes clear and fairly through the rings without tangle or catch. (See Plate IX, Fig. 1, p. 211.) By extending his left hand farther out and away from his side he can increase the quantity of spare line up to a certain point. Should he require more still, he will have to take hold of the line above the second ring instead of the first, or even if need be the third or fourth, and so on, and thus he will be able to get out sufficient line safely to enable him to cast his tackle without catch or tangle to almost any reasonable distance he may require for roach and dace-fishing.*

We will suppose that the float is cast to its destination, which should be a little up-stream from where the angler is standing, with the point of the rod raised always if possible above or up-stream of the float, and just so much as to keep a moderately tight line, not sufficient to lift or check the float (for if this happens the float is drawn inwards towards the bank, and probably out of the swim), but sufficiently to enable the angler to strike the instant he perceives a bite, and without having any bagged or slack line. Following the float with the point of the rod, and lowering the point until all the line he can give is given, the angler then applies his left hand to the reel and turns it gently as before described, giving off line as it is required, but not faster, nor yet so slowly as to check the float. The instant he sees a bite he strikes sharply, but not too heavily, up-stream, and, having hooked his fish, winds on him with the reel until he gets him well under the rod-point. Failing in getting a bite, he allows the float to travel down-stream fifteen, twenty, or even more, yards until he is sure that he has completely covered the space where the ground-bait is likely to be—when he strikes, winds up the spare line, poises the rod, draws off the requisite quantity, and repeats his cast. If he has half a dozen full swims without a bite he usually considers there are no fish there, and goes on to another spot. But if the place looks so favourable as to tempt him further he may perhaps try the experiment of two or three more worms broken up. Usually, however, he is not induced to commit such extravagance. If he gets a fish or two, or a bite or two, he then breaks up a few more worms at the first pause in the biting and keeps to his swim, only repeating the dose when the fish begin to slacken in their biting. A dozen worms will often be all the ground-bait he will use in a pitch which may give him as many, or even double as many, fish.

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* This style of casting the bait will be found most useful to the trout-fisher when wading and spinning a minnow or casting a worm.—F. F.

The hook-bait in this kind of fishing is usually a small red worm, though scratching (as they term greaves on the Trent) is used when worms are not to be had. One great point the Nottingham angler pays the utmost attention to is, that all his worms shall be thoroughly sweet and scoured, and as lively as possible.

Having now described this method of fishing, it will be seen that a fine line is of the first necessity to it. It does not sink in the water, but lies lightly on the surface, so that the strike is not impeded in any way. It sucks up very little water, too, and soon dries ; and beyond this it runs off the reel much more freely than a thicker line would. So far there is every advantage in favour of it ; but if it rains, and the line, rod, and rings get wet, it becomes very difficult to get the light line to run, even by the most assiduous wiping ; and if there be a strong contrary wind, it is difficult to fish satisfactorily.

If he goes for barbel-fishing the angler generally uses a rod and tackle a trifle heavier and larger. This is called " light corking," because the float used is a light cork one.

This will carry sufficient weight to enable the tackle to be cast off the reel.* It will be evident that the angler has here no need to draw off line in the left hand as in dace-fishing. In roving for barbel the process is similar to that for roach and dace, but larger worms are used, and the tail of a nice lively lob is placed upon a hook some two or three sizes larger. Roving for barbel is not often resorted to if the angler can manage to bait a pitch the day before. Indeed, in order to increase the chance of sport, it is not unusual to bait two or three days before and to repeat the baitings at some twenty or twenty-four hours' interval two or three times.

It will often happen that the hole or swim to be fished is some distance from the shore and is deeper than can be conveniently cast from the rod—deeper, perhaps, than the length of the rod. When this is the case a float called "a slider" is used. The slider, as may be supposed from its name, is not a fixed float, it has a ring at the top and another at the bottom, standing out sideways so that the line may travel freely through them. To use this float, it is slipped on the line through both rings, and finds its resting-place upon the uppermost shot of the sinkers. When it is dropped into the water it floats in its proper position, but the sinkers carry the bait to the bottom, drawing line enough for that purpose with them down through the float rings. Now, the depth having been carefully plumbed previously, is marked on the line by the tying on of a little fragment of india-rubber elastic, which offers just enough resistance to prevent the line running any farther than is requisite through the small float rings, upon which therefore the bit of india-rubber rests, keeping the bait at the required depth below. Should a fish bite, of course the check of the india-rubber allows the float to be pulled down in the usual way, but it does not offer sufficient resistance to prevent either its being wound up,

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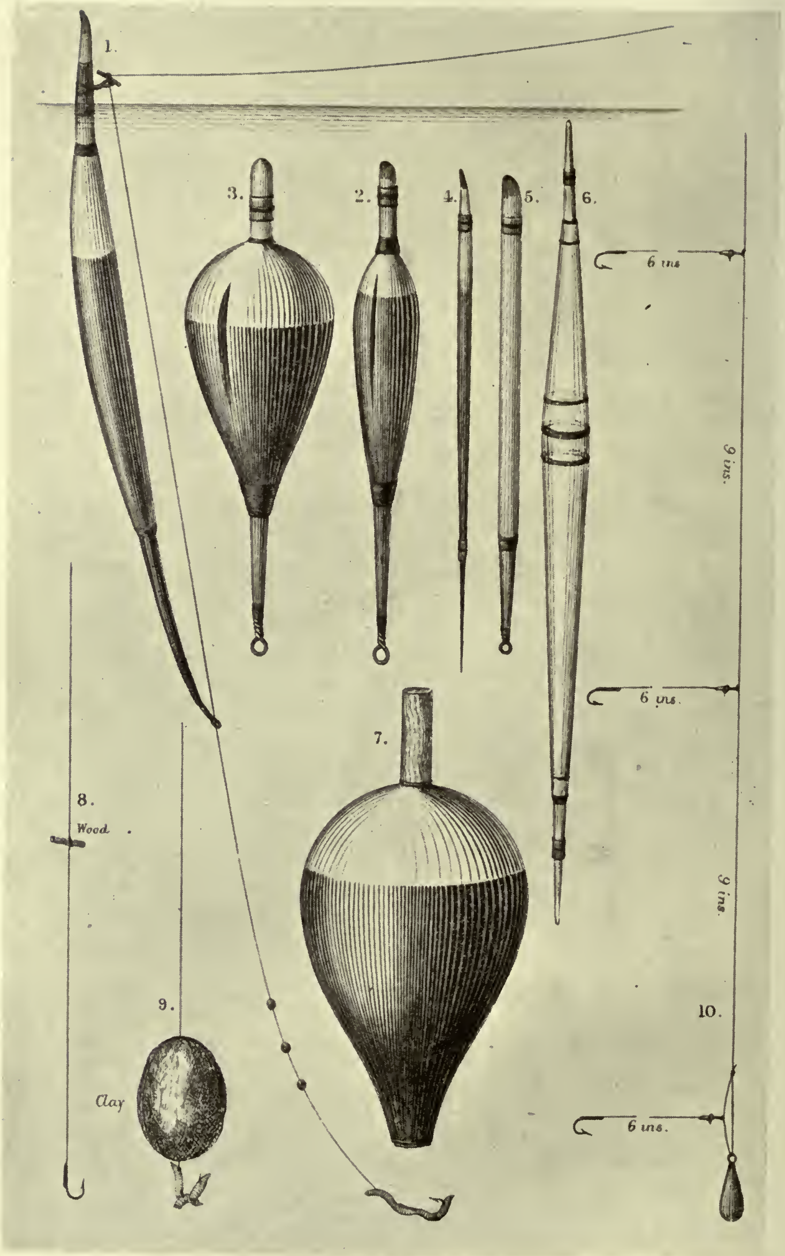
* This cast, however, is by no means easy to acquire. Even the old Thames spinner or ledger-fisher will find it no certainty, and at the commencement will very often find his float round his head, or his rod, perhaps, or anywhere but where he wants it to be; but patience, practice, and perseverance do much; and the chief direction to be borne in mind is, to avoid anything like a jerk: a smooth regular sweep is that which has to be practised in the delivery or casting of the tackle. Having gently swung the tackle backwards, bring it forward again with a steady regular sweep, and release your hold of the line without any abrupt action, and keep the little finger close to the circumference of the reel so as to be able to put on pressure to prevent overrunning of the line or to stop it altogether, as may be desired.
F. F.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4.
5.
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6 ins
9 ins.
6 ins.
7.
8.
Wood
9.
Clay
9 ins.
10.
6 ins.

To face Page 49.

THE SLIDER AND OTHER FLOATS.

The Fishing Gazette Float has now taken the place of that represented in Fig. 7.

or sent through the rod-rings when cast. The hole to be fished may be thirty feet deep and twenty feet from the shore, and the rod but twelve feet long, yet by the aid of the slider it can easily be fished. (See Plate II, Fig. 1, p. 49.)

The slider is now a good deal used by Thames fishermen for traveller-fishing in deepish water, because in playing a good fish with a fixed float, the float often comes up to the rod-point and prevents any more line from being wound in, whereas the slider slips down to the uppermost shot if necessary, and always accommodates itself to the depth of the water; besides which, if the bait or tackle hangs for a moment on the bottom, the raising of the rod-point brings a direct action on the line and tackle, and clears it without suddenly checking and altering the position of the float, or making a splash with it which would startle the sharp-eyed fish. Indeed, the slider possesses all the qualifications of ordinary floats, and some which are peculiarly its own, of which the others are devoid. In adapting the Nottingham fashion to Thames punt or traveller-fishing, the slider is not *necessarily* used, but a somewhat longer rod than the Nottingham bank-fisher employs is used, as the Thames punt-fisher is closer down to the water and has often a longer stretch of line to lift off the surface, as he frequently lets out fifty or sixty yards of line and strikes his fish at times a long way off. In this kind of fishing the rod is held and the tackle employed in the way that is described in chub-fishing.*

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* I have been told, since the first edition of my book was published, that my drawing and apprehension of the action of the slider as respects the position of the bait is wrong, that the float is so checked that the bait, instead of dragging slightly somewhat behind it, acquires precisely the reverse position, bending just as much in front of the float as I have shown it behind. Now I do not hesitate to say that this is simply impossible, for no bait and float could continue to travel so. If the bait touches the bottom at all, the line must bulge or project slightly over in front of the hook and bait, however slightly; and if the float be held back so tightly that the line is kept back, and the bait travels before the line, then I aver that the bait must absolutely be swept off the bottom altogether, and that it would be impossible to keep up such a constant nicety of alternate tension and giving off of line as should keep the bait to the bottom, and yet before the line and float. Besides, so much tension would draw the float and bait nearer to the bank, and therefore out of the swim in most cases. The whole of this theory is founded upon a considerable misapprehension as to the manner in which a fish takes a bait. The idea is, that as the line projects rather in front of the bait, it would come in contact with the fish's nose before the bait did, and scare him. Now that is supposing that every bait comes straight down the stream *directly upon* the fish's nose. Let anyone stand upon a bridge and look down at fish feeding, and he will see that nine baits out of ten are taken sideways, the fish making a side dart either to one side or the other,

In ground-baiting a pitch, the Nottingham fishermen seldom use clay or any substance of that kind, but break up the worms and cast them in alone. The number used runs from eight to twelve or even fourteen hundred as the case may require. They are not distributed too widely, but kept within the limits it is desired to fish, and twenty hours at least are allowed for the ground-bait to be consumed. Having baited their pitch, if the water be low and clear, they take care when they approach to fish, not to come too close to their swim or to make any disturbance, but they stand well above the place where they expect to find the fish, often fifteen or twenty yards above it, striking thirty or even forty yards off. Thus they do not alarm the fish, but often manage to get good sport in a water and at a time where and when a Thames angler would seldom think of fishing at all.

The principal baits they use are worms, scratching or greaves, cheese, and creed-malt. In all float-fishing their practice is superior to that of the Thames, and this appears to be so much recognised now, that Nottingham tackle and that style of fishing are very commonly adopted, but only in punt-fishing. The much more workmanlike, scientific, and deadly method pursued by the accomplished Nottingham bank-fisher is almost unknown to the generality of Thames anglers, yet it is quite high art in float-fishing from the bank, and is not at all easy to perform well. I strongly recommend anglers who can afford it to take a turn on the Trent, and put themselves under the tuition of a Nottingham adept; it will be money saved, as they will be thereafter very independent of punts and puntsmen, and will enjoy the active exertion of walking the river's bank in preference to the passively apoplectic operation of sitting in an arm-chair with a pipe and a bottle of stout as a *solatium* for want of sport.

as he sees a worm, grub, etc., passing him, and consequently, save once now and then, his nose would not need to come in contact with the line at all. The float should be checked so that as little of the line as possible should touch the bottom, and only the bait should drag to achieve perfection; but as to the bait curving down-stream and drifting along the bottom before the float, it is easier to imagine it than to practise it.—F. F.

CHAPTER III

BOTTOM-FISHING—*continued*

The Bream—The Carp—The Tench—The Eel—The Perch—Paternostering, etc.

THE BREAM (*Abramus brama*)

OF this lubberly carp there are two kinds known to anglers—the carp or golden bream and the breamflat or silver bream.* The former is by far the best fish both for size and quality, the latter being of no particular value for the table, and not reaching any great size, seldom exceeding one pound. The bream is very widely distributed, and is found alike in rivers, ponds, and lakes. In rivers it prefers quiet, deep holes with a loamy or sandy bottom. The deepest holes in ponds are likewise those preferred. The bream spawns about the latter end of May, and takes some time to recover condition. Bream are gregarious, swimming in large shoals, and when inclined to feed, vast numbers of them may be taken, as, although somewhat of a nibbler, yet if time is given to him, the bream will almost always take the bait in the end. If the angler does not know, but is desirous to find out the whereabouts of a bream haunt in a river, let him watch the likely spots early and late, and he will see one every now and then prime or rise up like a large roach, but, from some peculiarity, the bream, when it does this, almost always leaves a large bubble on the surface, which the roach does not do. When the angler notes a bubble or two of this sort left after the priming of large fish, let him watch the spot narrowly and he may soon perhaps satisfy his doubts as to whether there be bream there or no.

Bream have very roving habits, often disappearing without any apparent reason from a haunt they have affected for two or three years, and taking to some other hole or eddy. In my river (a part of the Colne) I see this peculiarity often exemplified, for they will be in one hole in a large shoal on one day, and on another perhaps half a mile off.

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* They are distinct species, the breamflat being *Abramus blicca*.—ED.

Having chosen a swim, the angler should ground-bait and fish it after the same method as that directed for barbel; and with bream, as with barbel, worms are the best bait, though they will take gentles and other grubs. The hook used should be a size or two smaller than that employed for barbel, as the bream likes a smaller bait; but in other respects the tackle and method are similar. Bream may often by baiting be drawn out of their deep holes into the more manageable barbel-swims, and when this is the case both may be taken together; but if the holes can be fished by any means, the take will be both larger and more certain. To fish them properly, however, is often difficult, and when ledger-fishing under these circumstances it is advisable to fasten a hook on the ledger gut about six inches above the lead, so that there may be one hook on the bottom for the barbel and one just off it for the bream, as the latter is scarcely such a ground-router as the former.

The finer the angler can fish for bream the better. Indeed, whether for bream or barbel, his tackle never should be a shot heavier than the stream requires to ride the float well and steadily. In ponds, or in still quiet eddies, the angler will often find that the bream will lift and throw the float flat upon the water. The reason of this, I imagine, is that the bream is a round-shaped, round-bellied fish, and when it picks up the bait and then assumes its natural position to eat it, although the belly of the fish may touch the ground, the head and tail are some distance off it, and hence the shots and sinkers are lifted, and the float, instead of being pulled down, is thrown up. When hooked in still, deep water, the bream has a disagreeable knack of boring head down, and rubbing and chafing the line with its side and tail, so that the line often comes up for a foot above the hook covered with slime. When hooked in a stream after the first rush it soon turns on its side and comes in easily. Bream run to a good weight, six or seven pounds being not very uncommon, while occasionally they have been caught of fourteen or fifteen pounds weight.

In some of our lakes, particularly in Ireland, as Loughs Neagh, Conn, Corrib, and Erne, especially the latter, the abundance of bream exceeds all belief, many cartloads being often taken in one sweep of the nets. Bream bite pretty well during the summer, more particularly in the morning and evening, but as a rule they take more freely towards autumn. The carp-bream are eatable. Some anglers say they are really good fish: perhaps split, salted, and dried is the best way of eating them.* There is an old proverb among the French to the effect that "He who hath bream in his pond may bid his friend welcome." I fancy, "to a day's fishing" should have been added, as I do not think even French cookery could find anything worth eulogising in a pond-bream, which is for the most part the bream-flat or silver bream.

Many spots on the Thames, as Walton, Weybridge, Chertsey, Shepperton, Hampton, Kingston, etc., are or have been famous for bream, and the Colne abounds in them in parts. The East India Docks, too, formerly held very fine bream, and many of the waters around London have abundance of them. The midland counties' rivers, as the Trent, Ouse, and the Norfolk streams, are also well stocked with them.

THE CARP (*Cyprinus carpio*)

This cunning member of the carp tribe requires all the angler's skill to delude him, and it will often happen that even after the angler has exhausted his patience and ingenuity, our leathern-mouthed friend will altogether fail to come to hand, or rather to net. Small carp under and up to two pounds are not so difficult to take, but when the angler essays his skill upon the wily old veterans of the pond, it is quite another matter. It is difficult to get carp to look at the bait at all, and when they do they will more often nibble and suck at it, and leave only half of it on the hook, than take it fairly. It is wonderful, too, how soon even small carp get shy if they are much fished for. I remember two ponds in which as a boy I always could take large numbers of carp. In one I once took one of four pounds, though usually they seldom exceeded two or two and a half pounds; but fish of from one to two pounds I could generally catch in considerable numbers. In the other pond I have taken in one afternoon four that weighed over twenty-two pounds, and could easily catch ten or a dozen or more in one afternoon; but some years after, when the ponds became more popular and fishermen more plentiful, I have visited them and fished them in vain, although the carp were still in them in abundance, and might be seen rolling and grubbing all around the hook.

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* Mr. Greville Fennell, in the columns of the *Field*, has corrected me in this, and says that the carp-bream are held in high estimation on Trent side. I have never eaten them there, and therefore cannot offer an opinion; but the Thames bream are certainly indifferent fare, and very bony.—F. F.

Carp, owing to their caution, often live to reach a very large size, growing to between twenty and thirty pounds in weight. A large carp, too, is not only cunning before he takes your bait, but he quite appreciates the value of large masses of weeds to help him in getting rid of it, and as the angler is compelled to fish as finely as possible, and with not too large a hook nor too coarse gut, the wary old fellow will sometimes give you the slip even after he has been well hooked.

The usual method of fishing for carp is to employ a small light float and fine tackle, and to fish in the method recommended for "Pond-fishing generally." The hook should not be above No. 7, or 6 at the outside; the shot fine and some distance from the float, as the mere gravity of the hook, and worm will carry them to the bottom; the gut fine, round, and olive or weed-coloured; and the bait, a small red worm or a bit of paste. The depth should be plumbed so that the bait *may rest on the bottom.* It is not natural to see the bait hanging in the water barely touching the bottom, and that the carp know well enough. In this position, too, the gut ascends directly from the head of the worm, and the unnatural attitude of the bait challenges the carp's attention to this "new thing in baits." Mons. Carp then catches sight of the shot, and, lastly, in all probability, of the float above. All this is of course strange and unusual, and he proceeds to investigate the bait with all due care, nibbling and picking at it, like the female ghoul in the Arabian Nights, who ate rice with a bodkin; he cannot make up his mind to take it, and yet he cannot make up his mind to leave it, so he nibbles and nibbles, and at last you think he must have got the bait, and you strike. Now, it is not customary for baits to dash off in that frantic fashion; and therefore, while your bait dashes off one way, Master Carp dashes off the other.

It is best to take your depth the evening before you intend to fish, so that you need not disturb the spot when you come in the morning. A longish bamboo rod will be found useful for this kind of angling, as it is advisable to swing your float as far off from the shore as possible.

If it be not possible to select and bait your pitch beforehand, it will be only necessary to follow the directions for pond-fishing given at the commencement of this work. If, however, you can manage to bait your pitch, then select say, two places. Let the bottom be clear of weeds, and the spot be near rushes, or in some part where you see carp usually feeding. Then, go in the *morning* (if there are eels in the pond) and throw in a few handfuls of broken worms, gentles, or any other ground-bait you may select ; for if you are fishing with worms and there be eels in the pond, in all probability (as they are unusually busy *at night*) they will gobble up all the worms before the carp can get a chance ; and this is one of the miseries you have to endure in carp-fishing when using worms, viz. that when you expect a bite from some noble carp, which is cruising coyly round your hook, some wretched little eel comes and takes your worm, and the hauling of the little brute out is sure to scare the carp. It is better, perhaps—if they will take paste or any of the many vegetable or mealy baits recommended for them in the water you are going to fish—to ground-bait with them. In some places and at some seasons the worm is preferred, at others, paste. Having baited your pitch once or twice, or if you like oftener, come to the water with your rod all ready, your hook baited (and take care to see that it is well covered) ; pitch your float as quietly as you can out to the requisite distance, lay down the rod in the fork mentioned in Pond-fishing, and flip a few bits of ground-bait in round about your float. When you see a nibble do not be in a hurry, for at the best the carp is a slow biter, and the float will often bob and wriggle about for half a minute or so before the bite is confirmed ; get the rod carefully and cautiously in hand without disturbing the line or float, and when the float goes under and sails majestically away, *and not till then*, you may raise the point smartly, and in all probability a desperate rush (if the fish is a good one) will answer the strike ; play him as firmly as the tackle will stand, for the hook seldom breaks out of his tough mouth, and get him into the net as soon as you can, and with as little disturbance as possible. Then throw in a handful of bait and proceed to your other baited patch, and do likewise, allowing the disturbance at the first to subside before you return to it. By working the two pitches alternately in this way, you may get far more sport from either of them than you would if you had only one baited.

I have spoken of other baits, and there are an infinite variety which carp are said to take. For paste, both plain and honey paste, see "Bait Table." I have heard of anglers employing paste coloured red but have no faith in it ; paste mixed up with gin or with brandy is also said to be irresistible, but I cannot say that I have found it so, although assured of large takes made with it by friends: perhaps the carp I offered it to had "taken the pledge." A green pea is a noted bait for carp. One carp-fisher I know of, swears by boiled beans, the large yellow haricots, or the smaller broad bean for the hook, ground-baiting with boiled barley. Others get good results from knobs of potato about the size of a gooseberry. Mr. Goodwin, of Hampton Court, assured me that he has made some wonderful takes of very large carp, up to fourteen or fifteen pounds weight each, with potato, in the canal in the park there. His method was as follows: Choosing a clear place where ther were no weeds at the bottom, he would every evening for some days throw in two or three handfuls of chopped potatoes (the red potatoes are supposed to be preferable, but that may be only a whim). Then, when about to fish, he would take, not a float, but a rod with ledger tackle, with tolerably stout gut, and baiting the hook with a piece of potato he would throw in the tackle in the usual way, and allow the lead to rest on the bottom, slackening the running line. In time a bite would ensue; the fish would carry away the potato, and as he went off for two or three feet, the line would be yielded to him easily and without check, and would run freely through the bullet, when the strike brought matters to an explanation, and, as the gut was pretty stout, he was not allowed, even though a big fish, to have everything his own way. The potato should be parboiled just sufficiently to make it stick well on the hook. In this way, Mr. Goodwin assured me that he used to take two or three large carp whenever he went to fish for them, the evening being the preferable time. Stout tackle can be used thus, because the gut rests on the bottom, and the carp cannot see it as he can when it runs directly from the bait up through the water. It is for this reason that I always recommend, in carp-fishing, that the bait should rest on the bottom, and some inches of the line likewise; for, though the carp will detect the finest gut, as I have said, when the bait is pendent, yet he will not notice the coarsest tackle if it rests on the bottom. Indeed, I once took a seven-pound carp on an eel line with coarse string snooded hooks, in a pond where no one has ever been able by ordinary float and line-fishing to catch the carp at all, though they abound in the pond, and are of large size. In using paste baits, the angler will find it to his account, if instead of using a single hook he employs a small brazed triangle, or three hooks brazed together back to back, such as are used on spinning tackles. This holds the paste on far more firmly, thus resisting the carp's power of suction, and gives the angler a better chance of hooking him. The hooks must be completely buried in the paste, and the bait should be the size of a moderate gooseberry.

Some anglers in fishing a pond employ various devices to hide themselves from the sharp eyes of the fish, and stick in bushes by the margin, or even hurdles to shelter them. I never found this particularly desirable, though there can be no harm in it; but it is most needful that the angler should move with perfect caution, and should not stump about on the bank —a very few steps of an Irish jig, for example, on the bank, would be fatal to all hopes of sport for an hour or two. The angler need never be afraid to lay down his rod, as the bite is always so slow that he has ample time to regain it before striking time; but when he takes it up he must take it up carefully and not jerk the line.

In rivers carp bite more boldly than they do in ponds; at any rate, such is the case in the Thames, where they are often taken when the angler is roach or barbel-fishing in some parts. The favourite method of fishing for them there is by a very light ledger with a pistol-bullet, and a lump of paste. I do not, however, think the carp is native to the Thames. Some years ago a good many were turned in at Teddington, and there they certainly have thriven, and in the eddies by the weir (a somewhat strange place for them to affect) they frequently take the worm boldly, and show good sport; no doubt they might easily be increased in the Thames, and would form an agreeable diversion if more general.

The worst of the carp is that you must be content with your sport; for when you have caught him (in England at any rate, as far as my experience goes) he is not worth eating, being a muddy, bony, woolly beast, on whom any sauce or condiment is simply wasted. In many places carp are tamed so that they will come and feed out of their keeper's hand, and will even come to his whistle or any other accustomed signal.

THE TENCH (*Tinca vulgaris*)

The tench is a better fish for the table than the carp, and if caught in a tolerably well-kept pond, is not a bad fish to eat, the skin being thick and glutinous, and the flesh white, firm, and sweet. The method which I have described in fishing for carp with the worm and float answers equally well for the tench, save that the bait need not rest quite so much on the ground, but the depth may be plumbed, so that the bait may just touch the bottom in the usual way. The tench is a very curious fish in his habits. You may see a pond which is stocked with good tench, and look over it narrowly, and even do so many times, without having the slightest idea that there is a fish in it. I have known ponds which have been supposed to be fishless for years, by the merest accident to be discovered to contain large numbers of fine tench in them. In many places tench are very peculiar also in their times of feeding ; on some days they will feed well, while at other times you will not manage to get a fish in a week ; and though this is not *always* the case, they are yet usually more or less capricious. As an illustration of the above, I may state that I once knew a little pond in Hampshire, which was not perhaps more than about twenty yards square. I had many times seen it, but never saw a fish in it, when one day the person to whom it belonged, knowing that I was fond of fishing, asked me if I would not like to catch some of the tench in the pond. I had no idea there were any in it, but as he assured me there were, and as I had nothing else to do one afternoon, I got a bag of worms and walked down to the pond with my rod. I put up a small light cork float, and a couple of hooks, one four or five inches above the other, baited with red worms, threw in some broken worms, and waited. Presently I caught a little eel ; then another ; then a little tench of less than half a pound weight ; then one or two more eels ; and, although I kept on throwing in the broken worms I did no more, and finally I threw in the rest of my worms and went away disgusted, not having seen another fish move. Still the proprietor assured me there were good tench in the pond, and urged me to try again ; and the next afternoon, being inclined for a lazy hour or two, I took my rod, a book, and my pipe, and walked down to the pond. I pitched in my float as usual, and sat down behind a bush, lighted my pipe, and began to read, when on looking up I found that my float had disappeared, and was "making tracks" for the middle of the pond. Thinking it was only a small eel, I got up lazily, took up the rod and struck, when to my surprise, I found that I had hold of something a good deal larger than I bargained for, and after a tolerable tussle, I got out a fine tench of a pound and a half. The book was at once consigned to oblivion, and

I set to work carefully, and barely was my float settled, when "wriggle, wriggle, wriggle," it went, and after the usual preliminary gyrations and bobs which the tench generally communicates to it, off it went; I struck again, and got another fine tench of nearly two pounds: after this the fun grew fast and furious. Unfortunately, I did not keep score of the fish I caught, as, finding I was having such great sport, I was afraid of clearing the pond out, so I put most of them in again, merely keeping three brace of two-pounders; but I should imagine that I must have captured about thirty fine tench, not one of which would be under a pound and a quarter, and many of them topped two pounds and a half. Where all these large fish could have packed themselves in this mite of a pond without ever attracting notice, I could not imagine. Tired of pulling them out, I left off in the evening while the fish were yet biting freely. I went there again the next day, and caught *one* tench of three-quarters of a pound; but, though I fished there many times since, *I never caught a tench afterwards.* Tench at times feed freely enough all day; but the favourite feeding-time is at dusk, and when you can barely see your float—then they will take if they take at all.

Moderately fine tackle is desirable, but though the tench is a slow, niggling, tedious biter, he is not so wary as the carp. Oftentimes, however, he will play with and nibble at the bait, and will leave it after all. When the biting has been going on in this fashion I have found it a capital plan to expedite matters by *very gently* drawing the worm away a few inches, when Dr. Tench, thinking that he is going to lose his fee, usually comes after it and takes it well. This is a peculiar speciality in tench fishing which the angler will do well to remember, as it will often stand him in good stead. Two or three shots will be quite enough to sink the bait, and the hook should be about No. 7, not larger. Tench will feed on gentles and grubs, but the best bait by far is the red worm; broken worms to be used for ground bait, and a handful or two thrown in for one or two days before fishing, will no doubt serve as an aid to sport. Tench are fonder of weedy ponds than carp, and a space of a few square yards in the middle of banks of weeds is often a favourite find for them. When once hooked, there is little fear of losing your tench, though he makes a strong fight for his life.

The tenacity of life in the tench is very remarkable: I once carried one in the midst of a basket of other fish 100 miles —it was five hours at least out of water. It was at Christmas time, and though, at the end of the journey all the other fish were dead and stiff, the tench was alive; I put him into a bucket of water, and he swam about as if he had only just been taken out of the punt's well. My friends thought him uncanny and would not eat him, so I determined the next day to make my supper off him. I took him out of his bucket, gave him a tap on the head, rolled him up in a handkerchief, and put him into my portmanteau amidst coats, trousers, etc. I journeyed home again, and about five hours after I took out my tench to give him to the cook, when lo! he gasped; I put him into water, and he actually appeared none the worse for all he had gone through. Thinking then that he had earned his life, I gave him his liberty, and turned him into a small pond, and a twelvemonth after, when we were netting it, we got him out, and he had grown about half a pound. I have seen some tench, however, that have died in a much shorter time, though generally they have tough lives.

What truth there may be in the old story of the medical powers of the tench, I cannot pretend to say. He is rather slimy as to his skin, and if, like the bream, he can part with his slime freely, it might prove efficacious, like "parmacety for an inward wound" probably; but I can assume no other way in which he could be at all serviceable as a member of the finny faculty.

THE EEL (*Anguilla vulgaris*)

Angling for eels can hardly be looked upon as a matter of any great consequence, as regards sport; and yet there are times, such as very hot still days when the trout will not move, when sniggling an old eel out of his hole in some lock or hatch-gate is not altogether unamusing, while three or four of these fish form a by no means unpleasant change in the angler's bill of fare. And as at times the angler may be glad so to amend his supper or dinner, I give a brief account of the best way of taking eels.

Eels are principally caught in traps constructed for the purpose. These are made mostly at mill weirs and such places, but often independently of them. Stages are erected, and on them are set large baskets called "bucks." They are also taken in smaller baskets, called pots or wheels, which are set under banks, or in the runs between weeds. In the winter time they are speared, a spear being thrust into every likely looking spot in mud banks, where they are thought to be concealed, and occasionally an eel comes up hanging between the teeth, fished out of the seething flood by a demon prong, like one of the unhappy peculators in the boiling pitch of Malebolge, described in the *Inferno* of Dante. They are also taken on set night lines. But all these methods have nothing to do with angling.

From an angling point of view, they are taken, *imprimis*, with the rod and line, a worm on about a No. 6 or 7 hook being the favourite bait. It matters little whether a float be used or not ; the only requisite is to allow the worm to lie upon the bottom, whence it will be picked up by the eels, and as certainly devoured. It not unfrequently happens that one will take the worm in barbel or trout-fishing, when it becomes a very great nuisance, and if not very speedily unhooked, twists the line into knots, and covers it with slime. As soon as the eel is landed, the angler should set his foot firmly upon the body, and with his penknife sever the vertebræ at the back of the neck, when its struggles will almost entirely cease.* Eels have been known not only to run at and take a spinning bait, but even to rise at and take an artificial fly.

SNIGGLING is a most amusing method of catching eels. The tackle required for sniggling is simply some half-dozen yards of water cord, with a large darning needle lashed on crosswise by the middle, at one end of the line. This, of course, is easily carried in the creel, and when the trout will not rise, and the angler is at a loss for amusement (if the river presents facilities for it), he may kill half a dozen pounds or more of eels easily, and so, as I have said, amend his feed without wasting his time. He must cut a sniggling-stick or rod, from eight to ten feet long, or longer, with a curved or bent top—a hazel, alder, ash, or other twig will do. Taking then a lob worm, he must thrust the needle into the worm, until it be hidden within it (see Plate VI, Figs. 5 and 6, p. 93) ; then sticking the point of the needle lightly into the end of the stick, and holding one end of the string in the left hand and the stick in the right, the angler must " prospect " and look out for some hole in the bank, under a stone, or the side of lock walls, etc., which may be likely to hold an eel ; and directing the worm at the point of the stick towards the hole, it should be thrust as far as practicable into it. If an eel be there, he will immediately seize it, and pull if from the stick; when the angler feels the tug, he should draw the stick gently away from the spot, and give the eel time to swallow the worm; when he has reason to think it has done so, he must give a slight pull, and the needle, which has gone inside the worm straight down the eel's throat, will turn across in his gullet, and hook him safely. Now comes the tug of war. The eel will refuse to quit his hole very likely, and turning his tail about in its sinuosities, will firmly resist all efforts to withdraw him; but the angler has only to be patient, and keep up a steady strain on the string, and he will in time tire the eel out, and it will come out of its hole, when it will be easily captured. Eels of two or three or even more pounds weight are often thus taken.

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* A simpler and more effective way is to lay the eel's tail on a stone or the thwart of a boat and give it a severe blow with a cudgel or stone. This paralyses the creature.—ED.

CLOD-FISHING is another way of taking eels. It can hardly be called angling, though it has a rude resemblance to it. A large number of lob worms are strung on pieces of worsted, and these are all tied up into a mass somewhat resembling a small mop. This is called the "clod," which is attached by means of a stout line of convenient length to a suitable pole. When the eels are running or migrating, the angler takes his stand with a pail half-full of water beside him, and placed almost the length of the pole from him. He drops the clod into the water, and allows it to sink to the bottom; presently an eel attacks it; as soon as the angler feels the bite, he raises the clod with a steady lift from the water, and holds it over the pail. The eel's teeth being entangled in the worsted, he cannot easily of himself let go; but he is shaken off into the pail, and the clod is once more dipped into the water.

STICHERING is yet another method of catching eels. It is, I think, peculiar to Hampshire, as I never heard of it elsewhere; but there is a good deal of fun at times in a stichering party. The apparatus used is an old sickle, worn short and chipped so as to be roughly toothed. This is tied on to a light pole some twelve feet long. Armed with one of these and a bag the sportsman sallies forth to the water meadows, where the wide deep drains for irrigative purposes are situated. Peering about, at the bottom of one of these, he presently espies an eel, or the head of one, projecting from under a leaf or weed; he then gently and cautiously thrusts the hook under the eel's body, and with a sudden toss pitches him high and dry on the bank, and puts him in the bag. An unskilful sticherer will sometimes chop off his neighbour's ear, or poke out his eye, which doubtless lends excitement to the sport.

THE PERCH (*Perca fluviatilis*)

The perch is usually described as a bold biting fish, and so he may be where he is not much fished for, or where perch are over-plentiful and small, or when, like other fish, they have a hungry day ; but if by the above character it be meant that good perch are deficient in wariness, then I contradict it. Where they are at all fished—and my remarks apply to rivers and lakes where they are well and regularly fished for—there are few fish more capricious or careful in biting than large perch ; small ones may often be taken in any quantity, but not so when they gain experience. I have known places haunted by numbers of good perch—perch of from a pound and a half to three pounds in weight—and yet, season after season, there are seldom more than one or two of them caught, and these nearly always at the starvation part of the year, i.e. after the heavy winter floods, when the small fish are all driven up the brooks, and the perch are driven into the few eddies that exist. Here, while the river is tearing down outside in a spate, from one to two hundred, and sometimes more, perch will often be congregated in a space of some ten or twenty square yards, perhaps. After these fish have battled with the frosts of winter, on short rations for weeks, what chance has a minnow among such a host, or what chance even a hundred minnows ? No wonder, then, that you pull them up two or three at a time, one for each minnow ; the only wonder is that they do not, in their eagerness, swallow the plummet of your paternoster in its descent, by mistake. In truth and faith, January and February are deadly months for poor perchy. Cabined, cribbed, confined in a black hole of an eddy, they are pulled out not in braces, or even scores, but often to the tune of hundreds. I have seen and helped to catch ten dozen and over out of one hole, and have heard of twice ten dozen being taken. But catch Master Perch on a fine summer's day in this way, if you can. Often have I, through the crystal clear water, watched the proceedings of a dozen perch at the worm or a minnow on my hook, some twelve or thirteen feet below. How they come up to it with all sail set, their fins extended, their spines erect, as if they meant to devour it without hesitation ! and how they pause when they do come up to it, and swim gently round it, as if a worm or a minnow were an article of vertu, which required the nicest taste and consideration of a connoisseur to appreciate it properly. At length one of the boldest, taking hold of the extreme tip of the tail as timidly as a bashful young gentleman takes hold of the tip of his partner's finger when he leads her to the festive quadrille, will give it a shake. Now, if you are curious, watch your float; see how it bobs down, after a fashion that would make you think the perch must not only have swallowed the bait, but half digested it; whereas, in fact, they cannot make up their minds about it. Is it a safe investment or is it not? Is it real old Chelsea or only a modern imitation? And then comes an aldermanic perch, of nigh two pounds, a warm liveryman of the Fishmonger's Company, a regular turtle-fed lord mayor elect, with his cheeks blown up, his eyes staring out of his head, his fins all bristling with magisterial importance. "Now then, what is this case? Ha, hum! a worm, eh? yes. Found hanging about the streets with no ascertainable occupation, and without any home, eh? Ha! bad case—very bad! a mysterious and vagrom character, evidently. Take him away, some of you, and lock him up—very suspicious indeed—very much so; and so his lordship having taken a half turn, and a brief survey of the wretched trembling culprit, who with policeman hook stuck into him, Alderman Perch looking at him angrily and hungrily, and limbo gaping at him from Mr. Alderman's stomach, is drawn up as useless and thrown on one side; while, with a fan of his tail, the alderman scuttles off to a fresh case, and all his little people scuttle off after him, save, perhaps, one unhappy little devil who won't take warning. Anyone who wishes to see this portrayed, should look at poor Arthur Smith's lithograph of Rolfe's picture, called "the committee of taste." It is a grand bit of expression, and the combination of greediness, inquisitiveness, pomposity, and funk, in the picture, is perfectly delicious. But to my angling.

There are various ways of catching perch. The first, and most common, is with the live minnow, or, if minnow cannot be had, any other small fish, or fry of gudgeon, dace, or roach, will do; but these should only be used when the angler has no other alternative, as, although the perch is infinitely the more desirable and valuable fish, fry should not be wasted. There are four ways of using a minnow, all of which will take perch: viz. with a float and either one or two hooks, or a paternoster with two or three, with a loose line and roving minnow, or by spinning.

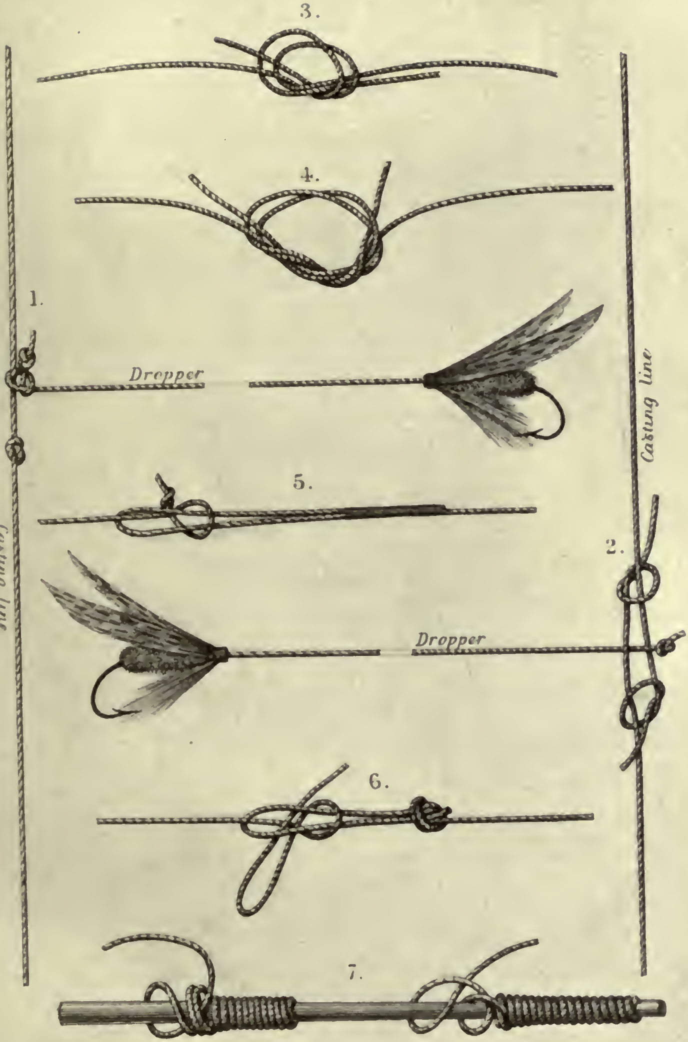
With the float, the lowest hook (if two are used) should be two or three inches off the bottom, and the next one should hang between mid-water and the bottom. The best way of baiting the minnow is to pass the hook tenderly and carefully through the gristle of the upper lip ; some choose the back fin, but a minnow so hooked neither lives so long nor moves so freely as when hooked by the lip. When a perch takes the float down, do not strike directly, as the tackle used for this fishing being usually fine, it is as well to make sure of him, for, in spite of anything that some sceptical anglers may say to the contrary, the scratching and losing of one or two perch *does* most indubitably very often—I won't say always, because there may be exceptions, but does very often—drive the shoal away. I have noticed it scores of times, and have heard many good and experienced anglers verify the fact. Therefore rather give him a little time, and even let him leave the bait, or cut it off, in preference to being too hasty and scratching him.

The paternoster is simply a gut line, a yard or four feet long, with hooks about a foot apart, and weighted at the end with a bullet or pear-shaped plummet. Some anglers use three hooks, and some two. a necessity which is more often regulated by the depth of the water to be fished. But the lowest hook, unless the bottom is unusually foul, should be almost on the ground, as it is the habit of the minnows to strike up toward the surface in their efforts to escape, just as it is the habit of all fish when pursued by an enemy ; fear causes them to seek the surface, and even to jump out of the water. Therefore if the minnow be not kept down, it will be much above the head of such perch as are lying at the bottom ; and, if the water be at all coloured (as is best for perch-fishing), this will not only be a fault, but a great one ; whereas, if the hook be kept close down to the lead, it will catch two or three fish against either of the other hook's one. The second hook should be fixed nine inches above, and must hang clear of the tie of the lower hook. This is the best form of paternoster made.

Some people make a paternoster by tying their hooks on to coarse hog bristles, and these again on to a piece of perforated bone, through which the main line runs, a shot above and below it keeping the bristled hook in its place. This is done in order to keep the minnows clear of the main line (bristles being stiffer than gut) and to permit him to swim freely and unnaturally round and round like a mill-horse—a very clever contrivance, and very exquisite fooling, but an abomination of abominations in practice. It is the paternoster of tackle makers—made to sell, not to catch fish. Paternostering properly followed is a very skilful and not particularly easy branch of angling, and as far as my experience goes, not one angler in a thousand knows how to make or fish a paternoster properly. You cannot fish too fine for the perch in season; and the finer you fish, the more and better fish you catch. To put a great coarse hog's bristle, with a cumbrous paraphernalia of shots and bone, under a perch's nose, is a downright insult to his common sense of self-preservation; and, if he condescends to take your minnow at all, he will take it probably *without* the hook.

Now, this is the way I make a paternoster, and this is the way that some old friends of mine, who are by far the best paternoster fishers on the Thames or anywhere else that ever I saw or heard of, taught me to make it. Make a long noose for the loop on which to fasten your lead, and in this loop, or immediately above it, tie another loop, by the simple process of doubling the gut and tying it; about nine inches above this repeat the process, and tie another loop, and at the same distance above that, tie another. This fashion of making the loops may be thought dangerous to the knot, but in reality it is not so when the gut is wet; and it has the advantage of always standing out at right angles, and so keeping the hook from the line. Into each of these loops slip the end of the hook gut, which should have a knot tied in the extreme end to prevent slipping, and secured by the hitch shown in Plate III, Fig. 5; a hook is thus appended to each loop, the gut to each hook being about seven inches long; the lowest one need not be so long. Persons who have not a great deal of experience in paternostering will object to the lower hook being so low down, urging that it is liable to take hold of weeds, etc.; practice, however, will change their opinion. The hooks are of Nos. 6 and 7 and of moderately fine wire, stoutish in the shank, and roundish bend, and are tied upon fine round gut, the main line being a little stouter. The lead is pear-shaped, and varies in weight to suit the stream; and even with this tackle, I do not find that I hook all the perch that come at it. A sketch of this paternoster may be seen in Plate II, Fig. 10, page 49. If any other form is wanted the angler must go to the tackle shops, for no other in my opinion is worth a straw.

To use the paternoster, first be sure your baits are alive,


3.
4.
1.
Dropper
Casting line
5.
Casting line
2.
Dropper
6.
7.

To face Page 66.

KNOTS, HITCHES, ETC.

and then commence at the top of the eddy or stream, and fish the eye, or first eddy, carefully, for there the best fish lie. Drop the tackle to the bottom, keeping a tight line, so that the lead touches the bottom, but with no slack line ; let it rest a minute, and if no bite come, lift it, and move it from left to right, or vice versâ, round about you, until the immediate neighbourhood is fished ; then, lifting the tackle out of the water, swing it out a yard or two farther down stream, let it rest a minute, and then draw it towards you, a foot or so at a time, until the tackle comes home, when repeat the cast, lengthening the distance each time, until the place is fished out, or you have to move lower down. If you get a bite, do not strike at the first nibble, but drop the point of the rod so as to yield a little line ; but when you feel a quick "pluck, pluck, pluck," strike firmly, but not too heavily, and remember that the *heavier the fish you expect to catch, the more time you must give them*, as they are slow and cautious, and if the hook be not well in their mouths, you will lose them to a certainty—when good-bye to sport. I always use a landing-net if the fish is over half a pound ; if under, I lift him in at once, as it saves so much time, from the other hooks often getting hung up in the net. Take care how you handle Master Perch, for he has sharp spines and gill points, and will frequently resent rough and unskilful handling by a sharp stab or two.

When two persons are paternostering from a punt, they should stand side by side in the stern of the punt, fishing right and left, merely bringing the rod round to the fisherman, who will take the fish off and rebait ; much depends upon the puntsman, and his skill in holding and managing the punt, in paternostering. A bungler will be sure to spoil the fishing.

The localities in which to look for perch vary with the season. Early in the summer the angler will find them in the streams, as in gudgeon-swims, into which they come when the ground is raked or disturbed, and here they often take the angler's gudgeon worm ravenously ; indeed, perch occasionally take a worm almost as well, and in some cases even better than they do the minnow. They are often taken on the ledger, and these are frequently the best fish too. Some time since, I was fishing with a friend on the Thames ; we were dace-fishing with the float line ; he had a paternoster out on his side of the boat for perch ; I had a ledger on my side for barbel ; I had at least a dozen bites, and caught two or three nice perch, while he never got a touch, with a choice minnow and a small gudgeon not four or five yards off, and the perch were feeding all around us. As the summer advances, the perch seek the deeper and stronger streams, the quiet eddies and deep holes near piles, lock gates, piers of bridges, corners of weirs, and by heavy weed banks. At this time they are well fed and cautious, and will try the angler's skill to make a good dish of them. As the season advances, and the winter floods sweep down, they all draw into the great eddies, or still corners, particularly after a sharp frost, and here they may be found in great numbers; and when the water is a little coloured, they may be taken in from three to seven or eight feet of water, or deeper, in any quantity, as they are then hungry, though in good condition. As March comes on, they get heavy in spawn, when they should not be disturbed. By the middle of April they get amongst the weeds, rushes, or fibrous roots of trees, in still backwaters, and here they deposit their spawn in long ropy glutinous masses. It is astonishing what a vast number of eggs the female perch will void; they are very small, and about the size and of the appearance of little seed pearls. Perch spawn about the end of April, and get into fair season again by the end of June.

Perch may often be caught with a spinning minnow, but it is not a very common method of angling for them, though the best fish are usually so caught; and I have known good execution done in lakes by spinning, either with a minnow (real or artificial) or a spoon. Indeed, I almost think, from my experience, that I am justified in saying that they take a spoon better than almost any other spinning bait; but I have found them prefer the triangular spinner made of spoon metal (commonly called the "otter") to the regular spoon, the only reason I can give for it being that it spins better and more evenly than the spoon, which wobbles a good deal, and though this is liked by pike, and not always objected to by trout, particularly lake trout, it would seem that it is not a strong recommendation to perch.

A handful or two of gentles or broken worms will be found useful as ground-bait, when float-fishing with worms. But whatever you do, do not take your wife's or sister's gold fish globe out with a muslin cover on it, and a stock of lively minnows inside, under the supposition that the perch will rub their noses against the glass, like cats at a dairy window, according to the old superstition.

Perch are commonly taken with the fly in some parts of the country, but this is a less general method of fishing for them even than spinning. A showy fly with tinsel on the body is most to be commended, the fashion being of no great consequence, perch not being very particular in this respect.

Perch in this country seldom exceed four pounds in weight, one of three pounds is a rarity, while a two pound perch is a fine fish. They have been known to reach nine pounds weight, and in the large lakes of Germany and Scandinavia they occasionally reach a very large size.* A dish of half-pound perch, however, is not in our less favoured land to be despised.† The best day's perch-fishing I ever had was on the Kennet, a capital perch river. I fished with a friend and we took home thirty-seven perch which weighed sixty pounds—many of them weighed two pounds and some were over that weight. My companion had three large perch on his paternoster at the same time ; he bagged two of them : one was two pounds, the other two pounds and a quarter, and the one which got away was larger than either of them. We lost a great many fine fish in the course of the day, I in particular losing nearly as many as I caught. I had another excellent day's sport on the Kennet last season, though of a mixed character, consisting of pike and perch, and which I have alluded to in the chapter on the pike.

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* Colonel Thornton in his *Sporting Tour*, chapter iii., records having killed a perch "of about seven pounds and a half" in Loch Lomond.—Ed.

† All British freshwater fish except eels, burbot and fish of the salmon family, are devoid of fat. Continental cooks understand this and supply the deficiency by skilful dressing ; but in England our people have everything to learn in this matter.—Ed.

CHAPTER IV

MID-WATER FISHING

The Pike—Spinning—Trolling with the Dead Gorge—Live Baiting, etc.

THE PIKE (*Esox lucius*)

THE pike plays no little part in the literature of angling; indeed, he has even been deemed worthy of a book to himself. Of course I cannot afford to give to him more than a limited space, and must treat him with infinitely more brevity than Mr. Cholmondeley Pennell has done. But if the reader wants to know not only the various methods of catching the pike, but all about him—including his birth, parentage, and education—with the history of his ancestors, etc., then I commend him to that capital work, *The Book of the Pike*.

Pike, under favourable circumstances, grow to almost any size a freshwater fish could be supposed to attain, even to hundreds of pounds. In this country they have rarely been known to exceed eighty pounds, but Sir J. Hawkins speaks, in his notes to the *Complete Angler*, of one caught at Lillieshall Lime Works, in 1765, which weighed one hundred and seventy pounds. (*Book of the Pike*, p. 15.) Even a forty-pound fish, however, is not by any means "common wares" nowadays. I have the head of one that size which was sent me by my late friend, "The Old Bushman," but that was killed in Sweden. The largest I ever killed was twenty-two pounds and a half, though I have, I think, hooked some of over that size, but it was when spinning, with the old three or four triangle tackle, which is a very risky method of taking large fish, and they invariably managed, after a run or two, to discard the hooks. The story of the Mannheim pike has so often been referred to that I feel bound not to pass him by. Mr. Pennell took much pains to investigate that story. The fish, when caught, was said to be two hundred and sixty-seven years old. The skeleton was preserved in the Mannheim Museum, and was nineteen feet in length ; but, upon being examined by a clever anatomist, it was discovered that several vertebræ had been supplemented. However much or little of this story has been exaggerated, the fact that pike, under favourable circumstances, will reach a very large size is undoubted, and the rate of growth in the earlier years, where food is plentiful, and the water suitable, is astonishingly rapid. Mr. Simeon, in his admirable *Stray Notes on Natural History*, cites an instance in which pike had increased to nearly twenty pounds weight (from two or three) in eighteen months, or at the rate of almost ten or eleven pounds a year.

The pike is from his habits a solitary fish, though big ones are often found in pairs ; and after floods and frosts they may, like perch, be found collected together in numbers, in any favourable eddy, such as the mouth of a back-water, or the tail of an island, the ends of old locks, reed or rush beds, the corners of tumbling bays, etc., all of which are favourite holds. They spawn from March till May, in ditches and backwaters, and, after a short rest, they scour themselves in the streams, and then take up their regular habitation and hunting-grounds for the season. The pike, when young, and up to about four pounds weight, has been called a jack, until by degrees it has often come to be called a jack, no matter of what size it may be. It is certainly one of the most omnivorous fish that swims, and, when hungry, nothing living, and few things dead, come amiss to it. I have known pike to take plummets and floats when in motion, under the idea that they were edibles, and retain their hold of them for some space in spite of strong pulling. Yet, where they are well fed, and are much fished for, they get tolerably shy and wideawake ; and a pike that has been run once or twice and roughly handled, is apt to come at the bait somewhat cautiously.

In fishing for pike, regard is to be had as to whether you wish to take them, big or little, indiscriminately, or whether you desire only to kill those over a certain size, returning all others to the water. If the latter be your aim, no gorge bait of any kind should be allowed, and the angler should be confined to spinning or snap-fishing. If, however, the former be your wish, you may use any bait or style that suits your purpose.

The most sportsmanlike way of fishing for pike is certainly by spinning, which is thus practised. The angler takes a small fish (gudgeon, dace, or bleak are preferable—if these cannot be obtained, he may use any other small fish which he can get), he then hooks the fish on to his line by a certain arrangement of hooks called a flight or set, so that by communicating a crook to the body or tail, it may, when drawn through the water, revolve rapidly on the screw principle. In order to permit the bait so to revolve without twisting the line, a tackle called a trace is used. This is about four or five feet long, and consists of a few strands of stout salmon gut, or of gut twisted, or even of gimp, linked together with a couple of swivels at intervals, about eighteen inches apart, a third swivel being sometimes used, to connect this part of the tackle with the running or reel line; a good large loop being left at the other end of the trace to loop the flight of hooks on, or for the purpose of changing them at pleasure. A drawing of a trace may be seen surrounding the spinning flights in Plate IV. The trace should not be less than from a yard to four feet long, and not more than five, or it will be found awkward in casting. Between the swivels the lead or sinker is to be fastened. In ponds, where the weeds come very near the surface, a sinker may be dispensed with, and the bait be allowed to run almost along the surface of the water. In this instance, the simpler the arrangement of hooks and the fewer there are of them, the better.

The sinker most usually adopted is the long, round, perforated lead, which is shown in Plate IV, Fig. 6, and through which the gimp is run. Some anglers use large shot; these are sometimes squeezed or bitten on to the line, and the gimp or gut thus so forcibly compressed cannot but be damaged and weakened. Others use a set of perforated shot with loops at each end, which is linked on in the middle of the trace between two swivels; but perforated shot cut the gimp in time, while some bite a number of shot on to a loose piece of gimp or gut, and then lash the set of shot on to the trace. But all these plans have this objection—the lead turns with the line, the twist, in spite of any number of swivels, is communicated to the running line and thus, when the twist gets into it it snarls, and kinks, and tangles, so that it will not run through the rings, which is very trying to the temper. Mr. Pennell, in order to prevent this, brought out a means of fixing the lead to the line, which certainly has the intended effect. The pipe lead has a wire run through it, which is attached to the trace by a wire eye at one end and one or two swivels at the other (see Plate IV, Fig. 7). This struck me as being a little cumbrous, and I brought out the "Field" lead (see Plate IV, Fig. 8), which is secured from shifting by a small plug thrust into the pipe to jamb the line; and, from experience, I can say that it answers thoroughly. With these leads, at least two swivels should be between the lead and the hooks, as all the twist is in that part of the trace. According to the depth or swiftness of the water or stream to be fished, so should the weight of the lead be; and this is a point to which considerable attention should be paid, as it is sometimes necessary to fish deep, and sometimes to fish shallow. Of the two, I prefer to fish deep, as the less distance a pike has to come after the bait the better, for pike will not always come to the top of the water after the bait even if they see it; and when they do come, they will see the deception so much more easily that, if they are not tolerably hungry, they will often refuse the bait. This is especially the case with good fish. Many a time have I, when fishing rather high, seen a good ten or a dozen pounder come up with a dash at the bait, and after following it for a yard or two, turn tail and leave it, when, probably, had I been fishing deep, he would just have put his nose out of the weed and snapped my bait. But there is a great advantage in fishing high when the fish are hungry. You cover so much more ground—that is to say, the fish can see the bait so much farther off. If the angler will glance at the diagram in Plate VI, page 93, he will see what I mean. A is one spinning-bait fished high, B is another fished low. Now, pike at C and D, and all within that range will easily see A, whereas B will scarcely be seen farther off than E and F. Still, if the fish are running shyly, two trolls or throws in the position of B are preferable to one at A. Of course, if the fish are well on the feed, and are ranging for food, it will matter little whether the angler fishes high or low, as within any reasonable distance his bait will be seen laterally, and probably run at. Whether it be taken or no, however, of course depends on the opinion the fish forms of it on nearer inspection. One point the angler should bear in mind, viz. that (provided the bait turns round fairly, so as to display itself well and hide the hooks) he cannot spin too slowly, and if he *over*-weights his line, in order to keep it clear of the weeds at the bottom, he will be obliged to spin so quickly, or to draw the bait along so rapidly, that he will not give the pike a fair chance of biting. Too swift spinning is a great fault, and it is, indeed, too common a fault in these fast days. The angler likes to be always throwing. "Swish!" —out goes thirty or forty yards of line. "There's a throw, Smith, my boy!" He likes to see his bait spin like a humming top. "Look at that, Smith, my boy! can you make a bait spin like that?" Possibly Smith cannot make a bait spin in that wonderful way, and cannot throw above twenty or thirty yards of line, but somehow Smith, with a short line, runs more fish than our fast friend. It has been the popular myth that a bait travelling at railway pace, and spinning like one long line of silver, is the correct thing, because it imitates a fish in an agony of terror. This argument is sheer nonsense, as fish do not conduct themselves like dancing dervishes or ballet-masters, and perform pirouettes when in a fright. They run away and turn, perhaps, from side to side, as the swimmer does, to gain increased power by concentrating every effort now to one point, and then, as a relief, to the other. The long, slow wobble of a badly spinning bait is much more like the *real* thing no doubt, but it is necessary to make the fish turn somewhat rapidly in order that the pike may not have too much uninterrupted inspection of the eight or ten hooks that encumber one side of the lure, and in order to present the silver side, constantly changing and flashing in the light, to attract the attention of the fish, which a badly spinning bait will not do; and it is to be borne in mind, that unless the bait spins very well indeed when drawn rapidly through the water, it will, when drawn only moderately slowly, as is preferable, hardly spin at all; therefore it is desirable that the bait should spin well.

The best kind of line for spinning, unless the angler be fishing with Nottingham tackle, or casting from the reel, is plaited silk dressed. In choosing the line, see that it be neither too fine nor too bulky. If it be too fine it will be constantly kinking in throwing, and it will not stand the requisite amount of wear and tear attendant on jack-fishing. If it be too bulky it does not go so freely through the rings, and much shortens the cast, besides being too visible to the fish. If very heavy baits be required and large fish be expected a stouter line must of course be used. Select a line that is neither too dry nor too sticky as regards the dressing. If it be too dry the dressing on the line cracks in places and the line becomes more like a land measuring chain than a fishing line; and if it be too soft and sticky it is a perpetual nuisance in casting, causing endless kinking, and the dressing very soon wears off. It should be fifty or sixty yards long—not that so much will be often required in fishing, but when used well at one end it can be turned end for end with advantage and answers all the purpose of a new line.*

The rod used in spinning for jack should be from twelve to fourteen or fifteen feet in length, with sufficient of spring in it to cast a bait well and yet with good substance to stand the strain and plunges of heavy fish should weeds intervene.† Some anglers prefer the rod made of cane; but if it *be* made of cane, the only kind that should be used for it is bamboo, the other canes having hardly sufficient substance in them. Other persons prefer it made of solid wood, and of all woods hickory is the best, with a strong spliced top. That is the rod I prefer. But, whichever may be adapted, the rod should be ringed with good sized stout, upright rings, to allow the line to run through them with perfect freedom. If the angle does not require to convey the rod from place to place, but is in the habit of fishing the same water, and has a convenient place for it, a single stick of bamboo, with winch fittings and a short solid spliced top spliced into it, will be found as useful and effective a rod as can be employed. I used a similar one for years when I almost lived on the Thames, and never had reason to complain of it, as it was both light and powerful. It will be found very advantageous with the ordinary rod to have two tops, the one a little shorter and stiffer than the other, for heavy baits and big fish, as the use of heavy baits with an ordinary top would soon strain and wear it out. Attention should be paid from time to time to the eye at the top of the rod whence the line is delivered, as this is apt to wear into grooves from the constant running friction of the line, and if not seen to, these grooves get so sharp that they will in once or twice using cut all the dressing off even a new line. A very good plan is to have enclosed in the wire eye a movable bone or mother-of-pearl ring, which can be turned round at pleasure so as to shift the place over which the line runs. Many eyes have been invented for the purpose of delivering the line with the least amount of friction, and various mechanical contrivances have been put into use, but I have seen none yet worth adopting.*

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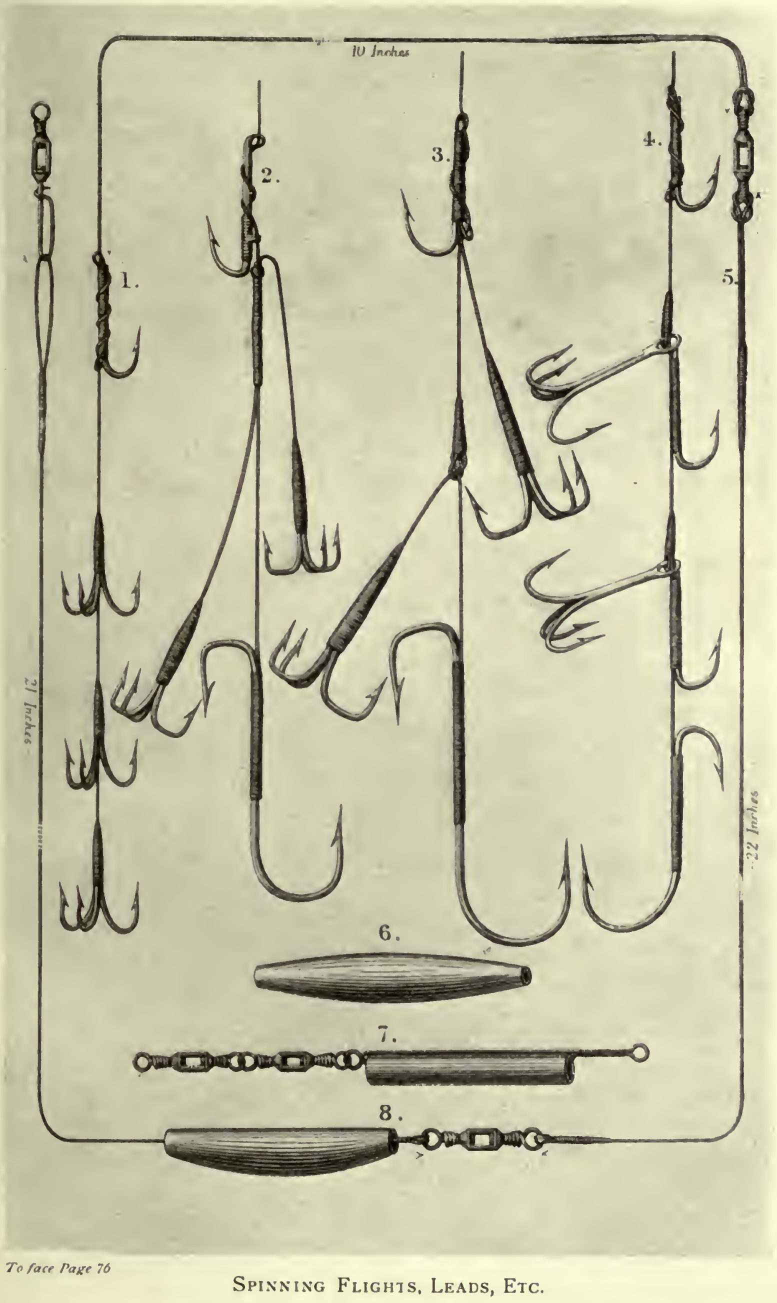
* The fine, but exceedingly strong, line used in tarpon fishing has largely supplanted the dressed silk lines in the use of spinning baits—Ed.

† The length of pike rods has been generally reduced in late years.—Ed.

A plain winch is best with not too heavy a check, so as to run the line off easily if the fish requires it. A winch that will hold sixty or seventy yards of medium sized dressed eight-plait line is desirable, and it should be pretty stout in the frame, as it will have to stand wear and tear and rough usage in all sorts of weathers. For this reason the metal reels will be found preferable to the wooden ones.

The last, and perhaps most important, point to be considered is the flight of hooks on which the bait is to be fixed; and about this there is a great variety of opinions, some anglers preferring large hooks and some small hooks, some many hooks and some few, some triangles brazed or unbrazed, some doubles and some singles; in fact, almost every possible combination of hooks and gut or gimp has been tried. The tackle in most general use is the old-fashioned three triangles with a sliding lip-hook (see Plate IV, Fig. 1, p. 76). Some use four triangles and a lip-hook, some have a double set of hooks or a triangle or two on either side of the bait; but I have never found that the multiplying of hooks beyond a certain point increases the certainty of capture—rather, indeed, the reverse, for the hooks are apt to entangle and one interferes with the action of the other. I have seen the hooks which have been rejected by a pike on several occasions come up all hooked and tangled together, almost in a ball, and each hook had evidently been instrumental in dragging the other from its hold. How much more useful would have been one single fair-sized hook well stuck in. Added to this, anglers should remember that it is far more difficult to drive four or five hooks simultaneously into the jaw of a jack than it is to drive one. Let the angler take a single hook, place the point against any substance and give it a pull so as to embed the barb, and then let him take an ordinary spinning flight and fix the points of two hooks in each triangle on the same substance and take a pull at the flight, and I do not think I am far out in my calculation when I say that it requires five times the force to bury the barbs of the many that would be required for the single hook, and of course the more the number of hooks is increased the less chance there is of the barbs being buried, and consequently the greater chance there is of the pike's getting off the tackle. The angler may

* Experienced pike fishers speak well of agate or porcelain eyes.—Ed.


10 Inches
1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
21 Inches
22 Inches
6.
7.
8.

To face Page 76

SPINNING FLIGHTS, LEADS, ETC.

depend upon it that the simpler the tackle, and the fewer hooks there are in it (combined with a fair arming of the bait and a reasonable chance of hooking the fish of course), the better. A great many pike do continually escape from spinning tackle, and these are mostly the best fish ; and a very hard stroke is required to send the hooks home beyond the barbs if many and good-sized hooks are used. I do not mean to say this is always so, because it may happen that only one hook comes in contact with the pike's jaw, but this is certainly exceptional. Another reason for harder striking than would at first seem necessary is this : the pike, when he seizes the bait, takes it across his jaws, that is, the head and tail protrude on each side of his mouth. Savage perhaps with hunger and rage he drives his long tusks almost through the bait. Now, the hooks being also buried in the bait, they must either be torn out of it, or the bait be dislodged from the firm grip of the pike's tusks, before the hooks can be stuck into him. It often happens that the angler will play a good pike for some minutes solely by the fish having his teeth stuck deeply into the bait, and not having the sense to open his mouth, or from his refusing to relinquish his prey. The first time he comes to the surface of the water he gasps for breath, his huge mouth gapes, he gives his head a shake and out tumbles the bait, hooks and all,* not one of them having had hold. Away then goes pikey, quite satisfied with his entertainment *pro tem.*, and wondering what that ugly two-legged monster with the hop-pole in his hand, and who looked in such a state of perplexity and stew, had to do with the matter. There is another reason why pike often get off through the barbs of the hooks not being fleshed in the pike, and that is, from the bad shape of the hooks, the points being far too long and the barbs much too rank. I have touched more fully on this subject in the chapter on hooks.

But, to return to that important point, the flight of hooks. The tackle with three triangles and a sliding lip-hook has perhaps the greatest number of admirers of any. Some anglers like to add a reverse hook, or a hook tied on the reverse way, just above the tail triangle, in order to secure the crooking of the tail; and this is a very useful addition, as it keeps the crook in form and protects and holds the bait together. In the common three triangle pattern too great space should not be allowed between the tail triangle and the second one, or the tail will have too much play and the bait will not spin properly. If the three triangles are short for the bait more space between the other triangles is preferable.

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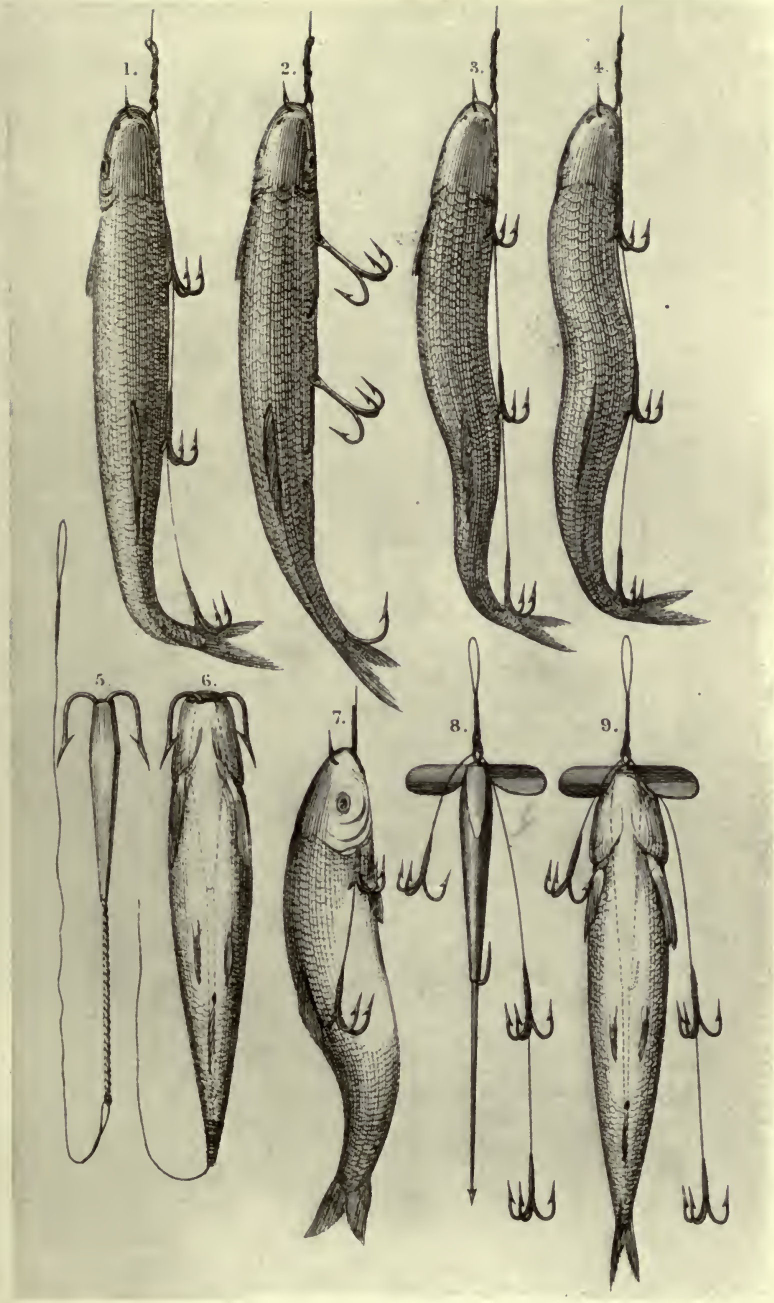
* Another reason why a pike is often thus held, is owing to the peculiar shape of his teeth. Let the angler examine the mouth of a pike, and note how it is made for holding. The tusks curve slightly backwards and inwards from the lower jaw, while all the upper teeth, particularly the palatel teeth, are bent directly back towards the throat, therefore the angler will easily perceive that if those teeth were buried in a bait, and the bait were drawn firmly forwards, it would not be an easy thing for the pike to disengage himself by any other method than the one suggested, and which he very commonly adopts.—F. F.

To bait the three triangle tackle, take a small fish (a dace, gudgeon, or bleak), stick one of the hooks of the lowest triangle into the flesh of the tail, bringing the point out on the same side so that the shanks of the hooks may be in a straight line along the side of the bait, draw the tail up so as to bend or crook it, and insert one of the hooks of the second triangle in the middle of the side, about or a little below the vent; stick one of the hooks of the third triangle into the middle of the side near the shoulder. It should, if the bait is suited to the size of the tackle, go in just below the pectoral fins; then, having slid the lip-hook down to the proper distance so as neither to bend the head of the bait nor allow it to be too loose, put the lip-hook through both lips of the bait, the point being upwards. Examine the drawing of the lip-hook and it will be seen that the gimp passes two or three times round the shank in order to secure it from slipping; by a little manipulation the lip-hook can be slid up or down so that the head can be slackened or tightened at will. The gimp is wound on or unwound from the shank of the lip-hook very easily if it be unlooped from the rest of the trace, by passing the end of the gimp under each turn. It is difficult to explain either in words or by a drawing this operation which is very simple if once seen. If the bait be put on properly, the three triangles will be in a straight line, along the side of the bait, and there will be no loose gimp between them (see Plate V, Fig. 1). If the gimp be loose between the hooks, the bait when drawn against the water "buckles" as it is termed, i.e. bends back as if the backbone were broken, and this will be found fatal to spinning (see Plate V, Fig. 3). If, on the other hand, it be too short and tight, the bait is bent the other way, and will wobble too much (see Plate V, Fig. 4). The hooks being all firmly fixed, if the bait appears to hang straight and fairly on them, drop it into the water and draw it rapidly along; if it spins to suit

PLATE V.



To face Page 78.

Spinning Tackles Baited.

your mind, proceed to fish with it. If it does not, tighten or slacken the lip or the shoulder-hooks or both as the case may seem to require, and try it again. These directions are to suit a dace or gudgeon or other round-bodied fish. With a more flat-bodied fish, as a bleak or roach, instead of the bait hanging quite straight upon the hooks, the head should be bent a little down towards the tail, and the body on the side opposite to the hooks should have somewhat of the curve displayed by the back of the bowl of a spoon (see Plate V, Fig. 2). Put on properly thus a bleak or even a roach may be made to spin quite as well and sometimes better than a dace or gudgeon. The directions given by many old writers to compress the body by tying it round and round with white silk are quite unnecessary. Poor old Tom Rosewell, of Marlow, was the first man who showed me how a bleak should be put on, and when he put one on and spun it, you could see nothing but one long even line of silver. I am particular in these directions as it has been the fashion hitherto with many authors to pretend that the putting on of a bait cannot be explained, but the young hand is directed to go to a Thames fisherman and to get him to show him how to do it. This is all very well, and I by no means disparage the advice, for the Thames fishermen are the best spinners in the world ; but it is not everybody who can go to a Thames fisherman and take lessons. Practice alone will enable the young hand to put a bait on with any certainty of its spinning well, or (as even old hands cannot always be quite sure of this) will enable him at once to know how to rectify it if it does not. But I think by following the above instructions and studying the cuts given, that, if in time he is not able to succeed, he must have less appreciation and readiness than a fisherman ought to have. The same directions will answer to the letter when I come to touch on spinning for large trout.

If the angler chooses to have tackle with four triangles, the only difference will be that the triangles will be closer together, but in inserting the hooks the angler must follow the instructions already given. He can also have hooks on the reverse side as well, but as these are supplementary hooks they have merely to be stuck loosely into the bait so as not to interfere with the hang of it, this depending entirely on the main set. I do not recommend them, however, unless the fish are very large and hungry, the tackle very stout, and very heavy striking be the order of the day. With these conditions they are very deadly, for I once used a double set of this kind made of large mackerel hooks (having no others), and throughout one whole day *I killed every fish I struck,** and they were not few, numbering thirty-six. This took place at Fordingbridge on the Avon, in Hampshire, many years since; but the whilom worthy host of the Star, Mr. Stewart, who wanted the pike taken out of the stream, as they had almost destroyed all the trout will, if still alive, well remember the slaughter of that day; the strike, however, would almost have broken ordinary hooks and tackle. I had used a single set of small brazed triangles the day before and lost a great number of fish, and so resorted to these in desperation: almost every stroke took one or two hooks clean through the jaws. Where pike are at all shy, this tackle would be useless, as there was visible more of the hooks than of the bait. If the angler wishes to fish very neatly and without show, he can, if using the white brazed triangles, wrap the silk lapping over with stout silver foil. This will protect the silk from the fishes' teeth, show little or nothing to alarm, and, if anything, lend an attractive brilliancy to the bait.

Before using any tackle composed of brazed triangles, the angler should test each hook carefully, more particularly if they are at all old or have been used and laid by for any length of time, or if they show any trace of rust, as the brazing often destroys the tempering of the hooks; at least, I conclude so, as I have frequently found hooks in the state I have mentioned, though apparently stout and well looking, snap at the slightest stroke, and many a good fish have I thus lost from neglecting this necessary precaution.

The simplest tackle in the way of triangles I have met with is that used by the Nottingham spinners. It is composed of only two triangles and a lip-hook. The lip-hook is a fixed one. The loop of the gimp is passed up through the gill of the fish and out of the mouth, the lip-hook being carefully manœuvred through also ; this is then turned and hooked through the lips in the usual way. The first triangle goes into the shoulder, and the last is brought up and hooked in over the tail part of the back, just behind the dorsal fin, the bait being drawn up so as to communicate a bend or crook to the body, and the bend is thus given to the middle of the bait instead of the tail (see Plate V, Fig. 7, p. 78). The flight is then looped on to the trace and is ready for use. It is a simple and effective method ; and a bait thus put on, if it be properly hung, spins very well, and shows enough arming sufficiently disposed over the main parts of the body to hook any fish that runs and takes it fairly. Nottingham fishers more often use a roach for baiting in this way than any other fish, and certainly a roach thus baited spins with even less difficulty than it does when baited on a Thames tackle with the tail crooked as is the custom there.

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* Only twice in my life have I ever achieved this feat when I have had any large number of fish run. The largest fish was ten pounds; the rest about three and four pounds each. The day was very windy and boisterous, and the fish hungry. Mr. Stewart and myself had as many fish to carry home as we could manage. The set of hooks I used was very large, and had three triangles on one side and one on the other. I gave the fish plenty of time, and then struck them as hard as I could with safety to my rod. Usually, the angler will find that upon a fair average he loses fully one-third of the runs he has, if he keeps a fair and honest score. On some days he will lose nearly a half when the fish run badly, on others of course much less; this may be modified to some small extent by improved tackle, but there will always remain a considerable percentage of scratched and lost fish.—F. F.

Some time since I invented a tackle for Thames trout, which was also made up by the tackle makers for pike. The object of that tackle was to obtain fewer but more effective hooks. It was a modification of Col. Hawker's, or, as Mr. Pennell reminds us, Salter's tackle, with a single instead of double strand of gut, a sliding lip-hook, and no lead cap. If the angler will turn to the chapter on spinning for trout he will find the circumstances relating to that tackle described, and in Plate IX, Fig. 7, page 211, he will find an engraving of the tackle. I originally intended this tackle to be baited by detaching the two portions and baiting the hook with the assistance of a bait needle ; but this process was troublesome and the tackle was abandoned for pike. Lately, however, I have used it in a different manner, and in the way I now employ it it is, either for small trout with minnow bait, or for large ones and pike, with a gudgeon or moderate sized dace, the most effective tackle by far that I have ever used. The way to bait it is to draw the lip-hook and triangle up out of the way. Then put the hook in at the mouth and out at the gills, and in again at the gills down through the body of the fish close to the spine, and out at the side about two-thirds down the body ; draw up the line in the mouth so as to crook or bend the body slightly somewhat in the shape observable in Plate V, Fig. 7, page 78, the big hook coming out of the side just below the lower or end triangle there shown. The lip-hook is then fixed, and the triangle stuck in, either on the near or the off side. I prefer the off side, as it gives a better chance of hooking the fish. Now the only difficulty in this tackle is the fixing of the lip-hook, which, in the form shown in the engraving, would give some trouble, and that I meet by having only one loop on the lip-hook instead of two. I only tie one good stout loop on to the lip-hook at the top of the shank, and when I push the lip-hook down to the mouth I can without any difficulty turn the main line, which holds the big hook, three or four times round the shank of the lip-hook. This secures the lip-hook in its place, and holds the triangle pretty firmly. This tackle is extremely simple and exceedingly effective ; I think that without doubt it combines the maximum of simplicity and effectiveness with the minimum of hooks. And having hit upon this plan of baiting the tackle, and being quite satisfied of its efficiency, I shall now never use any other. I used it all the last season and had some capital sport with it, holding and killing more large fish with it, and losing fewer fish than I have lost for years. I had on the Kennet perhaps the best half a day's pike spinning I ever had in my life with this tackle, running and hooking on ten fish without losing one, the average weight of the ten fish reaching thirteen pounds each fish. The largest fish was twenty-two pounds and a half, the next seventeen and a half, sixteen and a half, and so on, down to about seven pounds, which was the smallest. The rest of the day I spent in perch-fishing, taking about two dozen and a half, which ran from one to two pounds each fish, one or two being a little above two pounds. I had a friend with me who also caught a large number of fine perch, but he did not fish for pike at all. Now, if five hooks are capable of such a day's sport as this, what need is there for using double the number ? If the pike has four out of the five hooks inside his mouth, as will probably be the case, it is ample to give the fisherman a very good chance of hooking him. The bait does not spin quite so rapidly with this tackle, but as there are so few hooks about it, there is less need of it ; and few will deny that, if it spins well enough to realise such a take as I have described, there is not much to find fault with.

Soon after I brought this tackle out, Mr. Cholmondeley Pennell wrote a little work on spinning for pike, in which he described a tackle which he had invented, and an excellent tackle it is (see Plate IV, Fig. 2, p. 76). Mr. Pennell states, with respect to his tackle, that flying triangles, or triangles upon separate strands of gimp, are more correct in principle and kill more fish than if they were fastened on to the single strand of gimp in the ordinary way, and I am sure that he is right. The only possible objection I can enter to it is the plurality of strands of gimp he uses (or perhaps I should say did use), and the amount of lashing which must be rather conspicuous on the fish's side; and I should prefer the tail-hook, too, to be a trifle larger than in his original tackle, a sketch of which may be seen in Plate IV, Fig. 2, page 76. I have great faith in a big hook for big fish. Subsequently Mr. Pennell improved his tackle, enlarged the tail-hook, did away with much of the lashing, and adopted the shifting triangle attached to the lip-hook, which I had employed on my tackle, instead of two attached by single strands to the main strand of gimp—the shifting triangle being inserted on the reverse side; and in this form it makes the best tackle that had so far been invented (see Plate IV, Fig. 3, p. 76).

Wishing, if possible, still further to improve on the system of flying triangles, I hit upon the idea a short time since of employing triangles with loops or eyes, instead of tying them on to strands of gimp, and having a single hook tied to the main gimp under each triangle to hook the fish on, leaving the triangles to stand out free. My belief is that in most tackles the hooks lie too closely to the bait to take a favourable hold of the fish, and often hit upon the hard jaw-bone, instead of catching the more fleshy parts of the mouth. By letting the triangles stand farther from the bait, the chance of hooking is greatly increased. In Plate IV, Fig. 4, page 76, the tackle is represented, but I have had it also made with the shifting triangle for the reverse side, as is shown in Fig. 3, and it answers exceedingly well.

There is an immense variety of other spinning tackles, far more than can be noticed here, but the above are about the best of them. In the choice of hooks, Mr. Pennell strongly recommends the sneck-bend for the triangles, as being far more sure in hooking. I have certainly found that no hooks do so well or hook so many trout in fly-fishing, where the question is one of great importance; and I can see no reason why the principle which certainly suits best and prevails so very extensively in trout hooks should not be equally applicable to pike. Mr. Pennell says that, after a series of experiments, he has come to the conclusion that the advantage which the sneck-bend has over the other hooks is something like 100 per cent., and such being the case—as it cannot matter two straws to the angler which pattern he selects—by all means sneck-bend be it.

There are various ingenious inventions for the purpose of simplifying the art of putting on a spinning bait. Some of them are more ingenious than useful. The principle of most of them is to have a piece of flat brass, about the length of the bait to be used, pointed and barbed at one end. This is thrust into the mouth of the bait and down beside the spine until the barbed point is buried in the root of the tail; another barb half-way up the metal helps to keep the bait on and in its place. The other end of the brass has fixed on it a pair of wings or fans, on the Archimedian screw principle; these extend on either side of the mouth of the bait and communicate to it the spinning action. Above these wings is an eye in the brass from which a pair of triangles on one side, and a single one on the other, hang and form the arming of the bait; one of the hooks of the upper triangle on one side, and the single one on the other being hooked into the bait, serve also to keep it together. But in spite of all this, when there is the constant strain caused by casting and drawing against stream, the barbs will at times work loose and allow the fans to come up and away from the mouth, so that a short interval will appear between the fan and the head of the bait, which is very undesirable. To the eye is fixed a swivel to which the trace is fastened in the usual manner. Some of these artificial spinners are without the fans, and the spin is given to the bait by simply bending the tail, brass and all, the brass keeping the tail properly crooked. Some, again, have the fan at the tail, the tail being cut off, the spear thrust in at the tail and out at the mouth, an artificial tail being thus given to the bait. Most of these aids to spinning are leaded so that the weight is concealed in the body of the bait; but although it may be desirable to hide the lead and to show as little tackle as possible to alarm the fish, I have always found that the thrusting of a lead into the fish soon knocks the bait to pieces, and the belly and thorax are liable to cut out more or less speedily. Again, in these aids to spinning many of them require the baits to be fitted with some exactness to the apparatus and the apparatus to the bait. The best of them all, perhaps, is the Chapman spinner (see Plate V, Figs. 8 and 9, p. 78). But, however good they may be in one sense, there are many objections to them; and my advice to the young spinner is to learn how to put a bait properly on an ordinary flight of tackle devoid of aids or makeshifts of any kind, and to practise until he becomes an expert, when he will certainly decline to be bothered with any apparatus of the sort.

With respect to baits, pike are tolerably indifferent, and bleak, dace, gudgeon, or the young of barbel or chub, may be used for spinning baits indiscriminately, and even a roach can, as I have pointed out, be made to spin well. Bleak and dace of course are the most showy, and being for that reason more quickly seen, are therefore perhaps more attractive. But whatever be the baits, the angler should always take a good supply of them, as so many get cut, torn, and spoilt, that a couple of dozen will not be too many, and sometimes not enough, for each rod in a moderate day's sport. If the angler is not certain about procuring bait on the water he is going to fish, he should never trust to chance ; always make sure in this respect, and thus many an hour often vexatiously lost will be saved, and many an indifferent day turned into a good one. Never mind what your companion may say about being able to catch bait, or the probability that Jack, Bob, or Tom may be able to spare you some. Catching bait is always a very doubtful occupation, and although if you did not want them you might be able to pull out dace and gudgeon by the score, yet when you *do* want them particularly, they seem to have an instinctive knowledge of the fate awaiting them, and to be resolved to defeat your object. At the best, valuable time is wasted ; while, as for the hypothesis affecting Jack, Bob, or Tom, it never comes true when you most want it to do so ; unless, therefore, you are quite sure of a good supply of bait, take what you require.

If you are going to live-bait, a large can will be requisite to convey the fish alive to the river (see Plate I, Fig. 6, p. 9, for illustration of a live-bait can), and if it be a long journey and warm weather, there will be much difficulty in keeping them alive.* A small pair of bellows will greatly aid this, for by putting the nozzle to the bottom of the water, and blowing it two or three times, the water is aerated afresh, to the great reviving of the fish. If, however, spinning be the object, you may much simplify matters by getting a supply of dead baits. These may be preserved in various ways, by being either salted or, if the weather be cool, simply put into a box of bran if they are not required to be kept too long, or by painting them over with glycerine, or by putting a number into a widish-mounted bottle full of spirits of some kind.* The last-named method keeps the baits well, and their colour is as brilliant as in their natural condition, while they are rendered so tough that they will stand much more wear and tear. Take out of the bottle as many as may be required for the day, and if they are not used they can be returned to the bottle again. The angler should keep up his stock by adding fresh baits occasionally.

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* In cold winter weather baits will travel by rail a long distance without requiring much attention. Mr. Wright, the tackle maker in the Strand, brought out a useful little apparatus lately, in the shape of a compressible india-rubber ball and a gutta-percha tube, for aerating the water in a bait-can. —F. F.

We will now suppose that the weighty matters of choosing a tackle, fixing and baiting it, are concluded. Let the angler, if standing on the bank of a river or pond, see that the ground at his feet is clear of fragments of stick, etc., which may entangle in his line and spoil his cast; then let him draw off as much line as he requires from the reel, and let it lie in loose coils at his feet. Of course I am supposing here that he is about to fish in the Thames style, which is that most generally adopted, and is certainly the best and most attractive. Only on very foul ground is the Nottingham style of spinning at all preferable, and even here Thames fishers of experience will often greatly counteract this advantage by the knack which they have of gathering up the line in the palm of the hand by an up and down motion, something like that of a weaver with a shuttle.

Supposing, then, the line to be ready: it will be best to commence with a short line for practice, say ten or fifteen yards; this can be increased progressively, by pulling some two or three yards extra off the reel between each cast, and *just after the angler has made his cast, when all the line is out.* Holding the rod above the reel firmly in his right hand, with which he clasps the line to the rod, and with his left hand† taking hold below the reel—the point of the rod being elevated in the air at an angle of about forty degrees, and the bait hanging downwards some five or six feet from the rod-point—let him wave the bait gently backwards, either to the right or across his body to the left, so as to get the swing; and when the bait has reached the full extent of the swing let him sweep his rod forward rapidly, feeling the weight of the bait and lifting it slightly as he delivers it, opening or loosening his right hand, when he has reached about two-thirds length of the sweep, so as to release the line just as he gives the lift spoken of, and directing at the same time the point of the rod towards the spot he desires to reach—the line will thus run freely through the rings, the bait will fly through the air, and if the strength and the lift be properly given, and the rod pointed aright, his bait will hardly fail to reach the point aimed at. To do this well and effectively will require some little practice. The bait should not be lifted too high or it will make too much splash when it falls; but practice alone will enable the angler to judge of this. When the bait falls in the water, he must allow it to sink to the depth he requires, and then he must bring the rod down parallel with the surface, resting the butt against his right hip or thigh. If the water is deep, and the angler desires to fish deep, he may let the point of the rod almost touch the surface of the water. Then, gripping the line again to the rod with his right hand, he must commence drawing it in with his left, loosing the grip of the right hand at every draw, and lifting the rod-point and working the bait in shoots, as it were, after each draw. Thus, he must keep on drawing the line in, letting it fall in free coils at his feet as before, until he has brought all the line once more to the shore. If these directions be properly carried out, the bait will come traversing the water about mid-water, spinning and shooting in a way very attractive to the pike. By raising the point of the rod he may, of course, work the bait nearer to the surface if required.

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* Salting and other methods of preserving baits have been completely superseded by bottling them in a solution of formalin.—Ed.

† Some anglers hold the rod only with the right hand, the hip forming a rest and a pivot, the line being held in the left; this is awkward and lacks the capability of precision, which is desirable whether in casting, working, or striking. It also gives the right arm too much to do, and in a long day's spinning with a fourteen or fifteen feet rod this will be found a consideration. —F. F.

The length of cast which an angler will find it convenient to make is that which he can not only cast but fish best. Some anglers can cast from thirty-five to forty-five yards; but for fishing purposes twenty to thirty yards is long enough, unless a special case occurs to require more. The question of how much can be cast is doubtful. I am sure that I have seen fully fifty yards if not more cast with a heavy live bait and float. I can manage forty-five yards with an ordinary tackle, and bait weighing from one and a quarter to one and a half ounces. Long casts are often useful when it is required to get a live bait well out in a lake or pond.

With respect to the pace at which it is desirable to spin, as

I have before said, I prefer slow spinning, as it gives the fish more time to see the bait; but it must not be so slow as to spoil the spinning. I do not know that I can give the reader a better idea of how to regulate this than to quote Mr. Pennell's words on the subject. He says: "The draws or pulls and the corresponding movements of the rod must of course be varied in length and rapidity according to the depth of the water, size of bait, and other circumstances; but a good medium speed, when the left hand is carried well back, is about forty draws per minute." This, as Mr. Pennell says, is a medium pace.

To fish a stream properly, that method is the best which enables you to cover the most water with the greatest ease and the shortest time, and the best way is to cast across and rather down-stream, and to repeat it three or four yards farther down and nearer to you until you have fished all the water you can cover—when move on. Always fish your cast out and do not be in a hurry to withdraw the bait, as pike often follow it and take it close to the boat or the bank. Greville F. tells a story in the *Field* of one following the bait with such good will that, missing it, he ran his head against a post and stunned himself, and was thus lifted out in the landing-net without more ado. Some anglers prefer to cast up-stream where there is not much current, and draw down, under the impression that the fish has thus a better chance of seeing the bait; but straight casts up or down should be avoided as much as possible, as the fish sees too much of the line.

If the angler feels a check or stoppage of the line while he is drawing it home, he has to decide whether it is a fish or a weed or other obstruction. Usually if it be a fish he will feel the tug; or, if he drops the point of the rod, the line will move off; but if he feels nothing of this, let him tighten the line by raising the point slightly, when he will be able to decide the question at once. If he has reason to believe that the check proceeds from a fish, he must strike directly and straight back and firmly, holding his fish rather tightly for the first few seconds, so as to embed the hooks in the pike's hard mouth before letting him work his wicked will; he can then ease him a little and play him to the best of his ability. Some anglers, when they feel a run, give the fish a few seconds. This is quite optional; but it is not necessary, as a pike seldom misses his grip if he means to take the bait, and as he holds it crosswise in his jaws, he has as much of the bait in his mouth the instant he is felt as he will have until he pouches. The angler should never strike upwards over his own head if he can avoid it, but sideways and downwards—parallel with the water as it were—and for this reason: if he strikes up, the hooks come into contact with the hard horny roof of the pike's mouth, and this is one mass of teeth, into which it is almost impossible to drive a hook deeply; whereas, if he strikes sideways, he has a better chance of getting hold of the softer and more fleshy lower jaw.

Mr. Pennell recommends striking twice, so as to be sure of driving the hooks in. It is, however, quite possible to lose a fish by striking twice—the first strike sending the hook in, and the second striking it out again. But there is this much to be said in that case, viz. that the hold must be rather a slight one, and that there would be every possibility of the fish breaking from it whether or no; whereas if the points only without the barbs are buried in the pike's jaw the second strike will certainly make assurance doubly sure by sending the barbs home. Therefore I leave the angler to adopt whichever course he pleases. I never strike twice; but then I am bound to say that sometimes when using a tackle with many triangles I certainly do lose a good many fish, and the more triangles the angler employs the harder he must strike to be on the safe side.

If a pike runs deep when struck, hold a firm hand upon him, so as to keep his head up out of the weeds; and always, if possible, particularly if he is a big one, keep the point of the rod behind him so as to pull the hooks into his mouth instead of out of it. If the fish be straight down-stream below you, rather drop to him than pull against him, for if when you are so pulling he happens to open his mouth and give his head a shake or two, it is a hundred to one that he shakes himself free, unless your hold is very good indeed. If a pike comes to the top of the water, standing on his tail as it were (as if you were weighing him), and with open mouth "grins ghastly" at you, shaking his head to and fro savagely, you are in no little danger of losing him. I have lost scores in this way. The only thing to do is to drop the point of the rod and let him have nothing to struggle against, when he will speedily recover his horizontal; for if you hang on to him, you are unusually lucky if you kill him. Get the point of the rod down to the surface of the water if he shows symptoms of coming to the top, so that the weight of line may aid in deterring him.

If you lose a fish after playing him for a turn or two, let not a moment pass before throwing again to the spot where you lost him, and he will possibly take the bait again; for pikey is very likely looking all round him in desperation at losing his prey ,and does not feel his scratches more than a wounded tiger or shark does, while his rage is kindled against the insignificant being which has scratched him and then run away. Of course, however, if you give him time to cool and reflect your chance is small of seeing him again.

Sometimes a pike will jump out of water like a salmon, when hooked. Always drop the point and slacken line to him when he does so, until he is well in his native element again, when you can resume your command of him. It is not a common trick, but I have seen it happen two or three times.

A pike is never safe with spinning tackle until he is in the landing-net.* Get him there as speedily as possible. He is always in danger of getting off just as you are about to land him, because if you use a landing-net you have to bring him near the surface.† Never let your man make a dash at the fish, or he may chance to catch your hooks in the net and lose your fish—which is by no means the object you have in view. Let him sink the net well, and as you bring the fish round sweep him into it *tail first.* If he goes in head first your hooks catch the net, the fish sometimes gives a spring, and you have to sit down and mend your tackle—at least occasionally you have to do so.‡

Having landed your pike, the next thing is to unhook him; and ware fingers here, for he has woundy sharp teeth. A disgorger (see Plate VI, Fig. 7, p. 93), as it is termed, will be found a useful aid. It is a piece of metal or bone with a notch in the end, and by pushing it against any hook that is fast it may be unhooked. To keep the fish's mouth safely open during the operation is not an easy task. Mr. Rolfe, fish artist, invented a machine for this purpose like to a pair of scissors with a rack. By opening these in the fish's mouth and setting the rack, the angler can poke out the hooks at leisure. When he is quite free, knock him on the head with a short bludgeon like a ship's trenail or a boat's rowlock, and put him in the creel.

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* And even when in the net I have known them jump out. I was once fishing at Hampton Court with my old acquaintance Mr. Frank Matthews, the well-known comedian. He hooked a fish of about seven pounds; Wisdom, our fisherman, attempted to land it while it was some distance off, and as he held the net extended it jumped out again into the water and escaped; ten minutes afterwards I caught the same fish again. I have, too, known a fish go through the bottom of an old net, and playing a heavy fish in this predicament offers both variety, novelty, and excitement.—F. F.

† The gaff is a most useful auxiliary here, for big fish particularly.—F. F.

‡ I lost a ten-pound fish in this way in the Kennet some time since: I was perch-fishing and the net was much too small for him. I had no assistant. The bank was too rotten to finger him; a dozen times I got his tail in the net, but he always contrived to slip out at the critical moment. At last I slipped it over his head, determining to fetch him out with a swing, but at the instant of reaching the bank he jumped out again and into the water, leaving the paternoster hooks fast in the net.—F. F.

There are many other ways of taking pike besides spinning. Trolling with a dead gorge bait comes next, but it is not so much practised now as formerly, as there is little which can be done with it which cannot be done better with the spinning bait. The only advantage it presents is that you can fish amongst weeds which could not be fished with a spinning bait. In Plate V, Figs. 5 and 6, page 78, will be found representations of a gorge hook baited and unbaited. The dead gorge hook consists of two hooks fastened back to back; the shanks are then heavily laded, and are strengthened *ad lib.* by means of a piece of stoutish twisted brass wire, made of various lengths to suit various baits. The process of baiting is as follows: Choose a bait—a dace or gudgeon is the best—cut off the tail, and then slip the loop of the tackle into the eye of the baiting needle (see Plate VI, Fig. 8, p. 93).* Put the needle in at the mouth of the bait, push it through the centre of the fish and out at the tail, and draw the lead down into the gullet and stomach of the fish until the hooks are arrested at the mouth and lie upon each side of it. Tie the tail tightly to the gimp with thread, hook the eye of the gimp on to the line by a swivel, and all is ready for action. It is worked thus: Cast it into a hole, and let it sink; then lift the point of the rod and lower it constantly as the bait is drawn home: this causes it to shoot along through the water more like a live fish than even a spinning bait does. When a pike seizes it, or a check is felt, line is given out and the fish carries it where he pleases. As soon as he remains quiet he may be considered to have commenced pouching—that is, gorging or swallowing the fish. The angler does *not* lay down his rod, take out his watch, and wait five or even ten minutes to steady his excited nerves, as recommended by old authors—if he does, he deserves to get into difficulties—but he waits until he thinks the fish has gorged the bait, keeping the line all clear for a run in case the fish moves. In about five minutes, if he does not move, he will have pouched or gorged, when the angler can gather in all the loose line and give him a persuasive tug. As he will probably be tugging at the poor wretch's vitals he need not pull very hard. If the fish moves soon, the angler must use his own discretion as to whether it may be worth while waiting to see if he will seek another hold or whether he has bolted the bait at short notice. Savants—telegraph clerks probably—pretend that they can tell by certain tremblings of the line whether a fish has pouched or not; I am not so well up in piscatorial electricity as to be able to do so. As a general rule, a pike moves as soon as he has pouched; when he does, stick the hooks into him at once. If by chance he does not, but appears desirous of making a time bargain of it, the angler must, as I have said, use his own discretion as to the time when he shall think it desirable to foreclose the mortgage which Mr. Pike has taken of him. If the fish be a large one, perhaps half the above time, or three minutes, will be enough for him; if a small one, the shorter time the better, because he may get off without being killed, which the gorge bait necessitates to every fish indiscriminately. As I have said, it is not a nice way of fishing; the fish is very apt to reject the bait on feeling the lead within it, or from not being very hungry, and the waiting is tedious, and the whole affair is so unsatisfactory and savage that let those follow it who list, for I'll none of it. Nobbes, who is called "the father of trolling," gives very special and particular directions with respect to it. To those who desire to know more of it, I say, read Nobbes.

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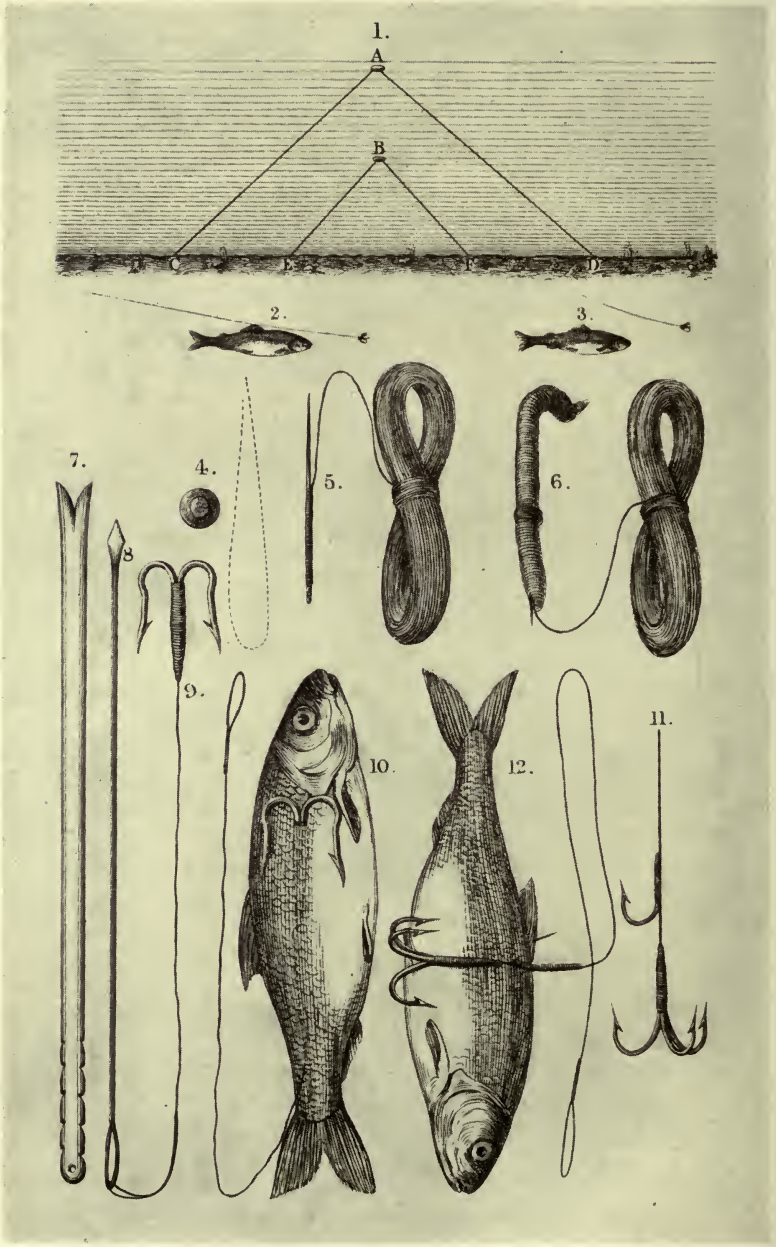
* I invented some years since a little leathern machine for carrying baiting needles and disgorgers; as these implements are so easily mislaid and difficult to find, that they are always missing when wanted. It was simply buttoned on to one of the breast-buttons of the angler's coat, and was thus always at hand. Mr. Bernard, of Piccadilly, took up the idea and made several.—F. F.

Live baiting is the next method for discussion, and the only way in which this should be pursued is by means of the live snap. Gorge baits of all kinds, which were invented by the father of cruelty, should not be permitted on any excuse where pike are preserved, because no matter what the size of the fish may be, they kill him. The live snap is usually composed of a triangle, of which one hook is small and two are large. The small one is whipped on high up at the top of the shanks of the two larger ones, and it is on this small one the fish is fixed by the back fin, the two large ones hanging down the side. A better plan by far is to use a largish triangle, a single hook

PLATE VI.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To face Page 93.

Live-bait Tackles, Etc.

being whipped on the gimp a little above it, the triangle hanging down loose by the fish's side (see Plate VI, Figs. 11 and 12, p. 93). As soon as the angler perceives a bite, giving the fish half a minute or a minute to get the hooks well into his mouth, but not time enough to pouch, he strikes. A float is used with this tackle. Some anglers like a large pear-shaped one (as shown in Plate II, Fig. 7, p. 49)—I do not, as it is apt to catch in any obstruction, and so lose you your fish—a large carrot-shaped or cucumber-shaped one is better. A single hook thrust through the nose of the bait is often used; but unless the bait be of small size, as in paternostering, this is rather a gorge bait, and time must be given for the fish to pouch to be sure of getting the hook in his mouth. Others use a double hook, or two hooks set back to back and tied on gimp. A baiting needle is then hooked on to the loop of the gimp and the point is introduced under the skin just behind the pectoral fins of the bait, and the needle is run along towards the tail and brought out above the vent, or a little nearer to the tail, and the gimp is drawn through, so that part of the gimp and the shanks of the hooks are hidden under the skin (see Plate VI, Figs. 9 and 10, p. 93). This plan is only adopted when very long throws requiring a good deal of force are required, as, if any other mode of baiting is practised, the bait is apt to be thrown off the hook by the force employed. It is a very cruel plan, however. When such plans as there are adopted, as is often the case by pot-hunting anglers with two or three or more rods, I would ask what difference there is between them and trimmer-fishing.* One can scarcely be held to savour more of poaching than the other.

A very killing plan, also much adopted, more particularly by the Thames anglers, is to use a paternoster with a couple of gimp hooks, and a bait on each. By this means every inch of water can be thoroughly searched, but as, when the pike runs, the lead or the spear hook and bait is apt at times to catch in a stone or weed, the fish have a fairer chance of getting off than with the float. Small baits and short law must, of course, be the order of the day. Some people set their faces altogether against the use of a live bait; but when the snap style is used, with a single bait, I do not think it is so objectionable, as I am sure that if the fish are in the humour far more fish are actually hooked in spinning than by any other means. I have often seen one angler spinning, and another live baiting, and I have seen the spinner take at the rate of five fish for the live baiter's one. Where, then, is the objection? It certainly is not a pretty way of fishing, and I dislike it because it is not so pleasant or lively a way as spinning; and it never can or will be so popular. The truth is that sometimes the fish prefer a live bait to a spinning bait, but more often the case is reversed; and if spinning is (as I know it to be) more deadly in respect to numbers than live baiting, upon what ground is it objected to? I rarely use the live bait, and certainly do not advocate it from any preference. But "live and let live." I do not wish to interfere with those who do, being well assured that I am more likely to spoil their sport than they are mine. Another reason why some persons prefer live baiting, is that a larger bait can be used, and there is far less likelihood of losing a large fish when once hooked, in live baiting, than spinning; and there is some reason for this belief.

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* In fact, the above is trimmer-fishing in disguise, the rod being a sort of neutral introduced to conceal enemies' goods, which are certainly contraband of fishing thus employed.—F. F.

There are various other baits used for pike-fishing, when fish are scarce; but it is needless to say that none of them are equal to fish in point of attractiveness. Perhaps a good yellow lively frog ranks next in the estimation of the pike. The way to bait a frog is to use one large long-shanked hook, pass it through the under lip and draw the hook down under the belly until the bend lies beside the thigh of the hind leg, to which it should be tied with a lap or two of silk: then work him after the fashion of a live bait. Mice, water-rats, and dead birds, will be taken at times, and an artificial rat may be made from a slice of the skin of a cow's tail, which is said to answer the purpose well; as I never used it, however, I cannot speak to its efficacy; but if an artificial bait be used, a good large spoon bait is perhaps as attractive as any. Mr. Pennell recommends a supplementary triangle to be added to the side of a spoon, as fish often run and miss the end hooks, and it is a good plan. Spoon baits are certainly excellent lures; they may be had of all sorts, sizes, fashions, and colours at the tackle makers', and as people have so many whims on this point, I leave the angler to choose for himself. Sir S. Baker, the great African traveller and Nile explorer, formerly a correspondent of the *Field*, once called my attention to a bait he had used with great success in Turkey. It was made out of a daguerreotype of an old lady; and the "old lady," as he called it, beat the spoon hollow. He took the plate (which was silvered on one face and coppered on the reverse), cut a rude resemblance of a fish out of it, turned the lobes of the tail reverse ways to make the bait spin, armed it well, and it succeeded admirably, never giving the spoon a chance. The otter (previously referred to in perch-fishing) is also a useful lure at times. And Mr. Hearder's plano-convex bait is an excellent one for general spinning either in fresh or salt water, and any fish which will take a spinning bait may be taken by the plano-convex. It is made of various sizes to suit the sort of fish angled for, and is contrived upon much the same principle as the other just alluded to. As regards the imitations of fish used for artificial baits, they are so numerous that it is quite impossible to catalogue them ; made of every metal, from tin to silver, and of all sorts of substances, from bone or horn and glass to indiarubber and leather, the angler must be difficult to please if he cannot select one to suit him from the stock usually displayed in our fishing-tackle shops. Perhaps as easily made and as effective a bait as any, is formed in the following way: Take a thin bar or strip of lead, of suitable length and expanded at the latter end into a tail, lash a wire eye on to the upper end ; wrap this over and over, round and round, with worsted or wool, moulded so as to shape a body ; then get two strips of kid glove, one olive for the back of the bait, and one white for the belly—these must be stretched tightly on the wool body and sewn on to it ; the leather should be well varnished, and the tail twisted as usual. I recommend this bait to the notice of economic anglers. If they like to put a strip of silver leaf along either side, under the varnish, and define a head and eyes, they may render it a little more attractive ; but it will be found quite killing enough without it—indeed, I doubt if any better artificial bait than this is made. It will stand a good deal of wear and tear, and has the advantage of being soft to the fish's teeth. In an artificial bait I certainly prefer a soft one to a hard one ; when it is soft a pike will hold it in his mouth as long as he will a natural bait ; when it is hard, of course he speedily rejects it.*

Pike are also taken in some waters with an artificial fly, and it is not a very uncommon thing for the angler to hook one on his salmon fly, nor to lose fly and all in consequence. The kind of fly most commonly employed is one of large size, with a pair of big outspreading hooks, the body being composed of divers coloured pig's wool, blue, yellow, and green, is as thick as a man's little finger ; it has a large heron's or other hackle for legs ; for the wings, two eyes from a peacock's tail, with a few showy hackles ; wide gold or silver foil ; a tail of various coloured hackles ; and at the head, two glass beads are strung on to represent eyes. This apparatus, which is more like a good-sized hummingbird than anything else, is cast and worked like a salmon fly, and when pike are inclined to take it, it is the most sporting and agreeable way of fishing for them. In shallow pools, where there is very little water above the weeds it will be found the most serviceable. There are many such places which are full of jack, and which it would be found very difficult perhaps to fish in any other way. But it need not be used exclusively in such spots, as it kills well at times even in deep water if the fish are on the feed.

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* The phantom minnow had not been invented when Francis wrote, else he would have assuredly recommended it.—Ed.

In some places, particularly in the Hampshire Avon, a rather primitive way of trolling is still indulged in : the tail and the head of a small eel are cut off and joined together, and one large hook being run down through the centre, so as to bend the tail sufficiently, it becomes a by no means ineffective spinning bait, though somewhat of the rudest. I have seen it used on a long horsehair knotted line, with a yard of fine whipcord, one coarse swivel, and a small bullet. The line is coiled round the arm, and no rod being used, the bullet is swung round and then jerked out into the water, being drawn in hand over hand. When a run ensues, the fish is struck and played by hand. This is perhaps the rudest fashion of spinning for pike extant, and must be a relic of the barbarous ages, I should imagine.

It is no uncommon thing for a pike to take a worm ; I once captured four in one evening with a small red worm and roach tackle, losing two others, which managed to cut the hook off ; and, on subsequent occasions, I took seven or eight more, one or two a day, in the same piece of water. They will also run at anything moving. I was tench-fishing on the same water towards dusk on one of these days, when a fish ran at and took my float as I was drawing it slowly towards me along the surface ; he got his teeth into the cork and could not get rid of it at first, and I played him for a minute or so until he managed to get quit of it.

Having now told the young angler how to prepare and bait his tackle, and what tackle may be used, with the methods of using them, how to hook, play, and land his pike, I shall tell him where to fish for him. When I say where to fish for him, I do not mean in what localities; for if I knew any good localities, I should keep them to myself, as my own experience tells me that good pike-fishing is far more scarce than good salmon-fishing, and is much more easily spoiled. I think this is owing to the practice among anglers of killing small fish. If we kill the small fish, it is evident that they cannot grow into large ones. Had I the management of a good pike water, I would allow nothing but spinning, and no fish under four pounds to be killed. Be satisfied, O angler, with landing the three-pounder; you have had your sport from him, let him go to grow bigger, that your sport may grow with him, and your horn be exalted some day at killing a twenty-pounder. Some time since, I turned seven fish of under a pound and a half each (part of my day's take) into a cunning corner in the Thames; the very next day a pot-hunter came and took four of them, and carried them away.

> Confound all pot-hunters,
> Frustrate these knave punters, etc.

say I; for they are the curse of most waters and of all fair fishers, while unfortunately their name is legion.

In ponds or lakes, the angler should attend more particularly to the shallow portions, where the water does not exceed from seven to eight feet in depth; and even in less than this he will find the best sport. Pike prefer the shallower waters, especially when feeding, as there bait is the most plentiful. If there be a shallow margin, and then a sudden deepening of the water, the fish are fond of lying just on the edge, between the two—at least that is where they more often take the bait, and a bait pitched off the shore into the deepish water, and spun rapidly towards the shallow, as if seeking to escape in that direction, will be pretty sure to "get a bid." The angler should always take care to pay especial attention to the neighbourhood of weeds, reeds, or flags; the last-named are very favourite lairs with pike, and when they exist to any extent, the angler will find his account in sending a boat or a Newfoundland dog into them, to beat the fish out, half an hour before he begins to fish. It may seem a strange direction to give, but it must be evident that if the pike be yards deep in a reed or weed bed they will hardly catch sight of the bait outside. If the weed bed has occasional holes and open spaces in it, it will be advisable, before having recourse to the clearing-out system recommended, to try them with the dead gorge. In such a place you are more safe to kill with it than with a dead snap, as you can hang on to your fish with more safety ; and should he make a twenty-yard's run in the midst of a thick weed-bed, threading innumerable rushy needles with the assistance of your line, he will be the less likely to leave you behind with nothing but half a hundredweight of weed on your hook and line. In lakes, try the sheltered shallow bays, where the bottom is well covered with lily leaves and roots, also the outsides of reed beds, and all such places. In rivers very much depends upon the time of the year. In the spring the fish are spawning. In the summer they lie in the open reaches, or the eddies and holes by weirs, and under boughs or mill aprons, by lock gates, etc. ; often feeding in the heavier streams. With the autumn floods, they get into the weed beds, or the large still spots where a back-water debouches, or below an island. In such places they will be often found gathered together in large numbers, on some favourite spot of ground but a few yards square. Always try such spots carefully, or you may miss the fish altogether, and yet if you take one, you may, by sticking to the same locality, catch a dozen or more. I once caught twenty-four in two days from under the apron of Hampton Court weir.

CHAPTER V

ARTIFICIAL FLY-FISHING

Varieties of Trout—Instructions as to Rods and Tackle—How to use them—Weather—How to choose Flies—Dress—Night-Fishing.

THE TROUT (*Salmo fario*)

PROBABLY of all the fish that inhabit the fresh waters, there is none which afford so wide-spread and great an amount of sport to the angler as the trout, and this is partly owing to the nature of the fish itself, and partly to the exceedingly wide area of its distribution, for it is found in almost all temperate and cold climates. But if the localities in which it is found are various, scarcely less so are the characteristics of the fish itself. Indeed, it is difficult to believe that the strongly marked differences found to exist do not almost constitute separate species. I do not allude to the mere question of size, though that is sufficiently striking at times to raise a doubt as to their identity in the angler's mind ; for who that looks upon the noble Thames trout of fourteen or fifteen pounds weight, in all its panoply of silver, could, when placing it beside the little dark-coloured, smutty-looking troutling of three or four ounces, hooked out from under some overhanging bank in a moss burn, hold that they were brothers of the same family ? But there are often actual differences in their anatomy, in so far as relates to the number of their fin rays and vertebræ. Indeed, in examining two trout from different streams, even though one may be a tributary of the other, not only will a marked difference often be observed, but that difference will hardly ever be found to be absent. This point is one which it is difficult to account for, and we can but speculate upon it. The markings also vary greatly. Some trout are almost without the red spots, others are as distinctly parr marked as any salmon fry, while their brothers in the same water will be destitute of such markings altogether. In fact, the varieties are endless, for every stream has its particular breed of trout, and hardly ever will any two be found to agree in all points.

I am, however, writing rather upon angling than natural history, and therefore I recur at once to the legitimate purpose of my work, merely throwing out a hint which may often find amusement for the speculative naturalist, who may be an angler also. But if trout are various in their forms and shapes, no less various are the means employed to take them, there being hardly any of the numerous plans adopted for wiling fish from their watery domains which may not be successfully applied to the capture of trout (for the trout feeds equally at the top, in the middle, and at the bottom of the water), while the baits and lines employed to take them are far more numerous than those used for any other fish—fly-fishing with live and artificial fly, spinning with every kind of real and artificial bait, and bottom-fishing in a hundred various ways, being all more or less in vogue with the adepts in trout-fishing.

The salmon-fisher rejoices in the vigour and size of his quarry, and exercises his patience and skill in the capture of the noble twenty-pounder, which gives him half an hour's wild excitement and pleasure ; but his skill and patience will often be taxed to the uttermost, and vainly, many a time and oft, in the attempt to hook some wily old four or five-pound brook trout, who may be feeding rapidly and constantly under his very flies which, tied on almost imperceptible gut, fall like gossamer above him, and float fruitlessly down o'er his head as like the real thing as human cunning can contrive. Nay, you shall even float the live fly, drake, stone, or what-not, over him so deftly that nothing in your deception seems to you wanting, You shall offer him worm, minnow, and cad bait, or drop the all but irresistible cockroach or cricket within his ken, while you remain concealed. He may wave his fan-like tail coyly, and take a nearer glance askance at your bait, but proves a very St. Anthony to your temptation. He will perhaps come to it like a bulldog, making your heart jump into your mouth, but he will even then " pull up sharp on the post," as turfites say, and refuse it. Do what you will, 999 times out of a thousand his virtue is ancient Spartan, and his cunning modern Spartan ; but haply on the thousandth, in some sheltering flood, a fair deceiver, which proves to be the " worst devil of all " to him, in the shape of a fat worm or minnow, tempts him—he gobbles it down, and dies the death. Happy you if it be your worm or minnow. There is far greater skill, caution, patience, and cunning required to delude such a fish than is thought of in the landing of the noblest twenty-pound salmon that ever sailed up Tweed or Tay. A good trout-fisher will easily become an expert at salmon-fishing, but a very respectable practitioner with the salmon rod will often have all his schooling to do afresh, should he descend to trout-fishing, before he can take rank as a master of the art.

As fly-fishing is at once the most popular and most sportsmanlike method of fishing for trout, I will take that branch first. It is the custom in many rivers, particularly in the more southern counties, as in Devonshire, for example, to commence fly-fishing for trout as early as the months of February and March. No doubt the trout being hungry feed better then, but they can hardly be said to be in such condition as the angler loves to see. In Devon, the trout do not, to my thinking, get into anything like good fettle until they have had a gorge upon that excellent and valuable insect the March brown. In many rivers the trout are hardly in fair condition in May, and often not until June, when they have fed upon the May fly. After this they are in the primest order, and require all the angler's skill to take them; but they will then repay him for his trouble.

To commence at the beginning, I will suppose that the angler is a novice, and intends to try his hand with a single-handed rod. This should not be less than eleven, nor more than thirteen feet in length ; between these extremes he may suit his requirements and strength.* I say strength, because the angler should never over-burden himself: an ounce or two too much in a rod is apparently no great matter, but when the same set of muscles have to lift that ounce some two feet from five hundred to a thousand times in the day, it will be seen that it must tell heavily.

The angler will, perhaps, be surprised to hear how little difference there is usually in the weight of single-handed trout rods. Here are the dimensions and weights of four, by four different makers, which I selected at random from my stock :

Gould.—A hollow cane rod, with ash butt, 12 ft. 8 in. long ; weight, 13 oz. 12 dr.

Cheek.—A common hickory rod, of the usual make, rather stout in the butt, but very handy and well balanced, 11 ft. 6 in. long; weight, 14 oz. 6 dr.

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* Present day fly-fishers will rub their eyes on reading this. Nine feet is the maximum length of a modern single-handed fly rod, the materials of which it is made, whether green-heart or split cane, being alike heavier and more powerful than those specified by Francis.—ED.

Bowness.—Ordinary hickory rod, rather light and whippy, 11 ft. 8 in. long; weight, 13 oz. 4 dr.

Aldred.—This is one of the glued triangular spliced rods, that is, the joints consist of three long pieces of bamboo cane, carefully fitted, glued up, and tied every inch and a half. This rod, though a beautiful specimen of workmanship, is rather tiring to the arm, being a little top-heavy, and lacking the free spring of the last two, though it has great power of resistance with a heavy fish. Length, 12 ft. 4½ in.; weight, 13 oz. 8 dr.*

That the reader may get an accurate comparative view of these, I put them together:

	oz.	dr.	ft.	in.
1 Gould	13	12	12	8
2 Cheek	14	6	11	7
3 Bowness	13	4	11	8
4 Alfred	13	8	12	4½

So that, after all, it reduces itself to a question of drams. Well, if a horsehair can pull down the strength of a great fish, a dram or two (no pun intended) may well pull down the strength of the human arm. The great thing I deduce from the above is, not to have a single-handed rod the least top-heavy. The rod which figures as the heaviest by ten drams in the above list is lighter to the feel and easier to fish with than either of those numbered 1 and 4, and yet it is ten drams heavier than one, and fourteen drams, or nearly an ounce, heavier than the other; and this I hold to be a significant fact, because the introduction of greenheart and Castle Connel rods has been working an entire revolution in this respect, and top-heavy rods are the order of the day. There is no doubt that you can with these rods heave out more line, but if the stream I desired to fish required long throws and more power, I would not sacrifice comfort in fishing, but would simply prefer a double-handed rod at once. The above-named rods, which are a good deal used now, are so small in the butt, and so top-heavy, that they are to me entirely detestable, and I would not fish with one of them if it would throw one hundred yards of line. I like plenty of substance in the butt to grasp, and then I am sure that any weight in reason which may be thrown into the upper joints will be carried comfortably.

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* This is the earliest mention which I have met with in angling literature of the split cane rod. The reader will note that it is of very different construction from the complex article, with or without steel centre, now in vogue.—Ed.

To get at a fair medium size for a single-handed rod, I would say that probably a rod of twelve feet, or thereabouts, will suit the generality of anglers sufficiently well. Then comes the question of pliability. Some anglers prefer a very pliable rod, others a very stiff one ; some a heavy rod and some a light one. For very light flies, delicate casting, and horsehair points, or casting lines, it is better to err on the side of pliability than the reverse, but when the trout run above half a pound in weight, and the stream is rough or otherwise dangerous, it will be as well to eschew horsehair. The novice certainly should commence with gut, if he would save himself endless breakages, losses of fish and flies, and interminable vexations. When he is *au fait* with that, if he chooses he can come to hair. A very stiff rod is useful under some circumstances, but is very apt to snap off flies, and, though desirable in windy weather, in moderate weather it will not cast so long or light a line as a fairly pliable rod. I like a rod which is neither too stiff nor too whippy, but of moderate pliability, so that it will cast comfortably a midge fly for a long throw without danger of flicking it off, or will lift a pound trout over a run of weeds when you want to get out of difficulties. It must be remembered here that the play of a rod is acted upon more or less by the weight of the line, and a stiff rod may be made more pliable by a heavier line ; as a rule, however, these two important articles should be carefully adapted to each other, for no rod will carry a line which bends it too much for any length of time without straining and warping irretrievably.

I have, however, after long experience, given up using single-hand rods altogether, for there is nothing which you can do with the single-hand rod which you cannot do with a double-hand one, and there are many things which you can do with the double-hand rod which you cannot do with the single. In the first place, you have much greater power in a double rod, and if you get hold of a large fish you can kill him with more certainty and less loss of time. You can also play a fish with more ease and lift your line over distant weeds, or bushes on the bank, which would often be fatal to the single rod. When the grass and weeds are high, or, as is often the case, there is a hedge within reach behind you, they can be avoided far better with an extra eighteen inches or so in the length of the rod, and when fishing with a single rod just before haymaking, the annoyance of catching hold of a long spear of grass behind you every now and then is very considerable. And beyond all this, to fish a whole day with a single-hand rod is very trying to the forearm, and more particularly to the grasp of the right hand. Many a time has my hand and arm ached so after a long spell of casting that I have been compelled to leave off to rest them ; and when the arm and grasp get tired there is not that certainty and precision in the cast that is advisable. For all these reasons, and many more which it is needless to enumerate, I hold that a double-hand trout rod is far preferable to a single one, and I am sure that any fisherman who gives them a fair trial will come to the same conclusion that I have. I have made many converts by inducing single-hand rod fishers to try one of my doubles for a day.

The ordinary length of a double rod is from about 14 ft. to 14 ft. 6 in. I, however, like a long rod, and I usually prefer one of 14 ft. 6 in. Such a rod should be tolerably pliable, while the selection of the wood may be left to the tackle-maker.

I will, however, describe two rods which I use, and with which I am quite content. The rod I generally fish with is three jointed, the two lower joints being of bamboo and the top of a single splinter of greenheart ; it has upright rings. This rod, however, is rather stiff in the two lower joints, but as there is plenty of flexibility in the top, a little care enables me to throw not only a very long line, but small flies without much danger. I had it made to pattern by Ogden, of Cheltenham ; and originally the top was spliced, and was some three or four inches shorter, and the reason for this was as follows. A season on the Border had shown me that when fishing the streams in that part of the kingdom the angler cannot tell when he starts, whether before the day is over he may have to use fly, worm, or minnow ; and to carry a rod with a spare top for these purposes, and to be changing the top now and then is inconvenient, and therefore I had a rod made which might answer without alteration for all these purposes, and I found that it answered very well indeed ; but not requiring it for that work, and needing it more particularly for a fly rod, I discarded the spliced tops, finding that as all the work in fly-fishing rested with the top, the splices suffered, and I had the greenheart top above-mentioned made, and of an extra length of some three or four inches, to give increased play. This rod I always fish with in small streams and it works admirably. It is very light and handy, possesses great power, for I can pull a pound and a half trout though weeds on an emergence with it without the slightest injury to the top—thanks to the noble qualities of the greenheart—and I can cast a midge fly with it as well as with a single-hand rod. As I am used to it I would not change it for any other. I leave other anglers to please themselves, as they may not approve of the manufacture. My other double rod is of hickory, and was made by Carter, of Pentonville ; it is 15 ft. 2 in. long, and is of course somewhat heavier than the last rod. It is a splendid rod for large fish, possessing great power ; for flies of moderate size it is perfection, but it is only fair to say that it is rather severe upon midge flies, and sometimes leaves the stretcher reposing on the grass. I had it made for large trout and sea trout, with the chance now and then of a grilse ; but it answers exceedingly well even on small streams, when the smallest sized flies are not needed ; and with a trout of from three to seven pounds weight, it is delightful to hold such a weapon. I killed four fish with a large palmer fly at Alton during two evenings in the first season I used it that weighed together twenty-two pounds, and the proprietor of the water was so pleased with it that he had one made to the same pattern. Previous to that time he had always used a single-hand rod, but as the fish run very large, even up to nine or ten pounds in his water, he often had great difficulty in landing them. These are the only two double-hand trout rods I ever use, and if my old bamboo ever wears out in my hands I shall certainly order another to match it.

As hardly anybody makes his own rod nowadays, the best direction I can give is to go to a first-class rod maker, pay him a good price, tell him the sort of rod you want, if you are not equal to choosing one for yourself, and leave it in his hands, and nineteen times in twenty you will have no reason to regret it.

The gut for the casting line, lash, or point as it is sometimes called, should taper from the loop down to the first drop fly, after which it should be as fine as can be obtained. If no drop flies are used, it may taper to within two feet of the fly, whence the gut should be fine. If these directions are properly attended to, they will facilitate straight, light, and even throwing. When two flies are used, the one at the extreme end of the cast is called the stretcher; the one which is fastened two feet or so above it is called the drop or bob fly; if three or more be used, the uppermost fly is called the first dropper, the next the second and so on. In putting flies on to the casting line, always put the heaviest fly on as the stretcher, for if this practice be reversed, the heaviest fly receiving the greatest momentum goes first, and is apt to double over the lighter one, and thus the drop will fall over the stretcher, and a foul will be the consequence; or to avoid this so much force will need to be used that the flies will alight in anything but gossamer fashion. It is almost unnecessary to say what will be the result of either of these contingencies if you happen to be casting over a good fish. Probably you will see a wave on the water as he dashes away to his lair, but that is all. You will have spoilt him for hours, and the fish that would have come up and sucked in your fly with the most confident greediness and innocence will remember the bungle that scared him perhaps for the rest of the day. I cannot too much impress upon the young angler the necessity for neat and light casting in trout-fishing. Old anglers sometimes *may* take liberties in this respect, and lose nothing by it, but then they know when to take them and how, which the novice does not.

The casting line should vary slightly in length with the water and weather. In June weather, and shallow clear water, not less than three yards should be used, three and a half is even better, and four *if* the angler can throw it neatly and well—which few can, for the longer the casting line, the more difficult it is to throw and place neatly.* In rough, windy weather, or in heavy, thick water, a shorter line may suffice. In windy weather particularly, a long casting line becomes troublesome.

In fixing drop flies on a casting line, loops are so clumsy as to be objectionable. I have tried all sorts of plans, and I find the following decidedly the best. At the knots in the cast line, about which I wish to tie my droppers, in cutting off the ends of the gut after tying the knot, I leave about a quarter or a sixth of an inch of the upper end, or that above the knot, uncut. This I secure to the line by a fine silk lashing, well varnished. On this I tie my dropper. It serves two purposes—stops the knot and saves chafing, and strengthens the line at the very point where it is weakest when a fish takes the dropper. I then cut the gut of my drop fly to about five inches long, well wet the end, and tie a single knot in the extreme end. I then take a single tie (the gut being still moist), the knot being upwards or away from the knot on the cast line, and draw the two tight over the dressed space above the knot, and it will never slip, at least I have never found it do so. This knot is shown in Plate III, Fig. 1, page 66. If you cannot open the knot with a pin point when you wish to take the dropper off, just slip the knot off with a penknife, and a pull will release the fly, while the loss of gut will not be a quarter of an inch. Several knots may thus be tied; and before you get the gut too short for use, the fly will probably be worn out. If you want to be very secure, hold the knot against the knot in the cast line, the fly pointing upwards and from it, and tie a single tie, and then another, between the tie and the end knot, and it is impossible to have any slip; but in this instance you will most likely find it necessary to cut the whole of the tie off, and will lose more than half an inch of gut. Where the droppers are not required to be removed, I have seen the flies dressed upon long strands of gut, and the gut tied into the casting line as a part of it some four inches above the fly, but I do not like the plan. Some persons, again, adopt the plan of forming a slip loop in the casting line, by tying each end of a strand round the gut of the other strand, slipping the knotted end of the dropper between, and then drawing the knots home tightly, as shown in Plate III, Fig. 2, page 66; but this is troublesome to open, it frays the gut at a critical point, and is not to my mind the most secure way of putting on a dropper.

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* The tendency of late has been to reduce the length of casting line. One of the two best dry fly-fishers of my acquaintance uses one not exceeding six feet in length.—Ed.

The running or reel line should be of hair and silk mixed.* Some anglers prefer plaited dressed silk, but I do not like such lines for single-hand rods; they want lightness and elasticity. Some, again, say that they should be all hair, but this is as bad as the other, as a hair line is apt to kink and hang in the rings. Some aver that silk and hair do not mix well—that one gives while the other does not, and so forth. I have occasionally in plaited lines found, after a heavy strain caused by the hanging up of a fly in some distant obstruction, and the strong pull required to loosen it, that strands of hair have broken into minute particles ; but I am inclined to think that the hair used in such cases was not at first of the best quality. I think there is greater ease and comfort in fishing with a plaited, tapered, mixed line, well made and of good material, than with either of the others. The line should be bought to suit the rod ; and here is a point anglers almost always lose sight of, though it is of great importance. Thirty or forty yards of trout line—that is what they require. It may be tolerably fine, or very fine, or perhaps moderately stout. Now, it may chance that the rod will not throw a very fine line, being somewhat stiff, and then ensues no end of poppings and crackings, as if the rod were a cart whip and the trout a team of Suffolk punches ; and flies go to grass, or supposing they do not go quite so far, the gut at the head of the fly gets so broken and damaged that the first good fish which comes at it takes it away. Perhaps, to avoid the incessant popping, the angler gives a little more time behind, when he makes constant and exasperating acquaintance with thistles, or a more than ordinarily long blade of grass, with a nice knobby unbreakable head to it, up to which the fly slides and jambs as neatly as if it were made for it. Mayhap, in one of these drawbacks, smash goes the top of his rod just above the brazing, and this will of course be well home in the ferrule, as it always is when you would just as soon that it was not, and you accordingly find that there is perhaps little or nothing to catch hold of to pull out the fragment by. You damage a favourite grinder or so in trying to twist it out with your teeth, and finally the aid of science, a penknife and picker, is invoked to worm out the stoppage. You are lucky indeed if the best half of the day is not lost in this interesting occupation, the trout meanwhile rising right under your nose, as if they knew all about it, and were determined to make the best of their time ; and when at last the spare top or the old one, by the assistance of a bit of wet paper and some lashing, is once more set up, the rise is over, and not a trout is to be seen. This is the pleasantest aspect, but at the worst (and this is something awful to contemplate) the refractory brazing resists all efforts to release it, and the angler has to put his rod over his shoulder and stalk gloomily home from two or three to ten or a dozen mortal miles, and all because he has neglected to suit his line to his rod.* Now, this is no fancy, and these are no imaginary cases. I have known them happen half a dozen times and more; on the other hand, perhaps, the rod being rather limber, will not support a heavy line, and the angler goes on threshing the water, coming down on the surface with a splash sufficient to frighten away every fish within fifty yards, all the while straining and warping his top all to pieces, as it keeps bending and groaning under the infliction, and perhaps actually in the end does smash from pure weariness, and then, "Oh, the wood is rotten!" and "Confound that rogue of a rod maker!" and the poor tackle maker gets a bad name through the fisherman's ignorance and carelessness. And I have seen this happen too, over and over again. A too heavy line in a month will wear a rod out more than years of fair angling. If in throwing the line when it goes back, and is about to be urged forwards, it feels in the least degree heavy, *it is too heavy for the rod.* If none of the above contingencies occur in *their* worst phases, then a still worse one happens in another, viz. to avoid the consequences here set down, the angler has to employ some particular knack or method of getting his line out, which inevitably gets him into a bad style, and a false form of fishing, out of which he will never after get as long as he lives. I cannot here give any exact directions whereby such errors in choice may be avoided, but if the angler will request his tackle maker to choose him a line suitable to his rod, he will seldom go far wrong. If this does not suit him, and he is unable to choose well for himself, then he must risk the consequences.

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* It is remarkable that the author, after having experience of a silk line, should have gone back to one of hair and silk, which most, if not all, present-day anglers regard as an abomination.—Ed.

The running line, like the casting line should be carefully tapered and should end in a neat loop.† If a knot be used and a tie be resorted to to fix the casting line to it, this knot will often, when taken apart, to save time be broken off, and the line little by little is reduced in length until much of the fine tapering is lost to it, and the thickness of the running line and the fineness of the cast make a very unequal junction, so that the running line goes before the casting line, and it requires a sharp switch or cut to get the casting line fairly forward. This makes the fly fall heavily and overworks the rod-top.

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* The author here describes graphically a mishap with which both salmon and trout anglers were painfully familiar fifty years ago. But the invention, first of the bayonet fastening to replace the slip ferrule in trout rods, and next of adhesive tape for lapping the splices of salmon rods, has redeemed the situation.—ED.

† This may prove harmless in fishing a wet fly down-stream; but in casting up-stream, wet or dry, a loop is very objectionable. So long ago as 1857 W. C. Stewart wrote in *The Practical Angler*: "Loops make such a show in the water that we never have one in any part of our line." Experienced salmon and trout fishers almost invariably attach the cast to the reel line by a figure of eight knot.—ED.

A plain click winch is the best. For trout it should be not too heavy in the click or the line will not pay out as fast as it is required should a good fish make a run; neither should it be so light as to overrun or leave loose line on the barrel. It should be capable of taking thirty or forty yards of line of medium size easily; should be broad in the plate and not too wide between the plates. Avoid all multiplying abominations as you would swearing, for the one will be sure to produce the other by getting out of order at the most critical moment. Having chosen rod, line, and casting line, the next thing to settle upon will be flies. In his choice of these the angler must be guided by the time of year and the character of the water. I have appended a list of flies selected from the best authors and my own experience. This list is a long one, and, for all general purposes, perhaps nearly half of the flies therein mentioned are unnecessary; many of them are tried favourites upon some waters and cannot safely be discarded. Those without any star affixed to them, in the condensed list, are such as I myself have found to be good general killers, and, with a fair selection of them, with a slight variety as to size and colour for various waters, the angler need never fear to attack any river in the kingdom, and sure I am that if he cannot find a killer among them his hopes of sport are very small.

Before proceeding to fish, the angler had better pick out a selection of those flies which he is most likely to want, and arrange them in the handiest places in his book. One never can tell exactly what one may require, but there are always several flies which are probable, and a few of these will be more than likely, and from them he will select his first cast. He should then always set up a spare cast of flies, so that if he meets with an accident or requires to change, he can do so at once with little or no delay, as when the fish are rising well, delays of any kind are intolerable, and to have at such times to be hunting your book through for a fly or two which should be ready to hand, is sure to be productive of three great and alliterative losses—loss of time, loss of tackle, and loss of temper. He must of course judge for himself whether in setting up his spare cast it is desirable merely to repeat the one he has on or to vary it. I find it most convenient to wind my cast round my hat, as it makes a larger coil and does not require soaking to take the turns out, and I find the fly hatband, which I invented some years since and gave to Mr. Farlow, of great service, as spare and stray flies can be looped on and safely stuck into it without damage to gut or hook-point, and when it is not wanted the band can be taken off and put away.

Having selected his flies and affixed them to his casting line, we will suppose the angler at the river side : approaching the bank with caution, let him choose the most likely spot to commence operations. Before commencing, however, he should be sure to see that his casting line is thoroughly straight and even with no bends or turns in it, as these will cause an unnatural glitter on the line, and displacement of the water. Now, there are two ways of fly-fishing, viz. with the dry fly and with the wet fly. Some fishermen always use one plan, others almost as pertinaciously use the other. To use either of them invariably is wrong. Sometimes the one will be found to kill best and sometimes the other. In fine waters, particularly in the southern counties, where fly-fishing for trout is certainly more of a systematic art that it is in the north, the dry fly is greatly used, and with very deadly effect at times. In very calm, bright, and still weather, when a wet fly will often be useless, the dry fly will be taken most confidingly. In rough, windy weather the wet fly is preferable, but I shall return to this subject presently. At present, as the angler is supposed to be a novice, he will hardly commence with the dry fly as it is rather more difficult to fish with than the wet. We will suppose that he has soaked his gut by allowing it to remain some minutes in the water. Old or used gut will soak much quicker than new—indeed, the angler will often find a good deal of trouble in getting new gut properly soaked. In this case, having wet it, he should draw it through his fingers, but not too roughly lest he fray the gut, then wet it again, and repeat the drawing and wetting until it becomes pliable.

Standing with his face rather up-stream, he must let off about as much or a little more line than his rod's length, and poising the rod in his right hand in almost an upright position with a slight forward slant, and holding the stretcher-fly between his left finger and thumb a little wide of his body so as to clear it, wave the rod gently back over his right shoulder, releasing the fly as he does so; when he has reason to suppose that the fly line is fairly extended behind him, he must bring it forward again with a slight outward sweep so that the fly may not double too sharply back or crack. If he does not give sufficient time for the line to extend itself, and if he makes the return too directly, he will probably hear a slight pop behind; if he does so a trifle more quickly and directly, the pop will become a crack, and then he will know that his fly is reposing peacefully in the long grass behind him, while his line, guiltless of a lure, is extended on the surface of the water. Some people who make the return very directly always pop their flies. The sound is a most unpleasant one to a neat fisherman, as at every pop the gut at the head of the fly is more or less cracked and broken, until at last the fly bangs by a sort of pulp, the hard surface of the gut being altogether destroyed. The angler may make the curve or sweep I have spoken of either on the inside or outside. The outside is the easiest to the novice, and the throw will be the more neatly made. To the experienced hand, the one is as easy as the other. By the outside sweep, I mean that the rod is waved backwards, say, six inches or so from the ear, and is then brought forward some six inches farther from it; in the inside sweep this is of course reversed, the line being cast back about fourteen or fifteen inches from the ear and returned forward at about six or eight inches. In Plate VI, Fig. 4, page 93, the diagram shows the direction the rod-point is supposed to travel over, as regards the head of the angler, which may be seen beside it. Now, in bringing the fly forward, the angler should fix his eye upon the spot he desires to cast towards, and endeavour to make the hand second the eye by urging the point of the rod towards it; there should be no jerking; the forward motion should be a little swifter than the backward one. When the point of the rod has reached an angle of about 45°, the motion should be checked or eased, so as to gradually check the line and let it fall lightly on the water. If this be not done, or a sort of forward cut be made, as though the angler were chopping at the opposite bank with his rod, the line is cast clean and hard down into the water and the flies make a splash. This may be requisite in very windy weather, particularly if the wind be adverse, but in such circumstances light throwing is of less consequence, as the water will probably be rough, and the only object is to get the line out at all. If the angler follows these directions properly, his line will fall neatly and well in the water. He should let it rest a second or so, then commence raising the point of his rod gradually until it almost reaches the position he started from, when he must, with a swift drag, raise the line sharply and neatly from the water, fetching the line back over his shoulder, and repeat his cast as already shown.

When by practice he can manage this throw neatly and well, he may let out a little more line, and so go on increasing the length of his throws, until he gets about twice the length of his rod out. For a first lesson he will find this sufficient; with this he had better practise until he can throw lightly and well towards his mark. Subsequent practice will no doubt enable him to cast three times the length of the rod, and every yard which he becomes able to cast over that is good work, but he should remember that long casting is one thing, but to fish a long cast properly is quite another. Many anglers may throw sixteen or seventeen or even more yards of line who cannot fish it. It is only the thoroughly experienced fly-fisher who can fish these long casts properly. A green hand may by dint of raising his hand to the level of the crown of his hat and slashing away at the imminent risk of tackle and everything else, be able to get it out somehow. But what a spectacle he becomes when, failing to get such a length of line off the water properly, he finds one of the flies in his whiskers and the other perhaps fast in his creel or an adjacent bush. *Let the young angler be content with doing what he does do well; increasing his range of practice by little and slow degrees, and making sure fishing of every extra foot he gains.* I consider from eighteen to twenty yards a very long throw with a single-handed rod, and there is not an angler in a thousand that can throw it; while, of those who can throw it (properly), not one in a hundred can fish it. I may add that I measure length of a cast from the reel. In long throws, the difficulty lies in getting the line quickly and neatly off the water, and for this purpose, of course, the draw should be made much sooner than in short throws. All casts with the single-handed rod should be made with the forearm. The upper arm should never come into play; the elbow should be kept not quite close to the side, but near it, and always down; and, in casting, the top joint should be allowed to do its full work. If this be judiciously attended to, the angler will find that even for long throws very little more force than usual is required; indeed, *the less force used the better*. The great proportion of anglers use double the force that would be needed to cast a much longer and lighter line than they do cast.

I will now suppose the angler to have acquired the art of casting tolerably well. Having cast his line out into the stream, so as to have it all clear and straight, he should make his first cast up-stream, parallel and as close as he conveniently can to the bank on his own side of the stream, as here the best fish are lying in wait. The line will come floating down towards him with the stream, and he should never draw it faster than the stream, or it will travel faster than the natural flies which are coming down with it, and this will beget suspicion on the part of the fish, besides making an unnecessary disturbance in the water. All that he has to do is to keep steadily raising his rod so as to keep the fly near the top of the water, and to have as little slack line in the water as possible. Some people work their flies; but unless the fly be sunk rather deeply in the water (when it is mistaken rather for some quick darting water larva than a fly), this is bad, and often destructive of sport. Watch the flies upon the water how they come floating down. They do not dart and spring and shoot about—that is, the great majority of them do not. There are one or two, as the stone fly and certain spider flies, that do so. If fishing with these, motion may be given to them, but with three-fourths of the flies it is worse than unnecessary. Let the fly come properly home and then make another cast about a yard farther from the bank, and so go on covering fresh water at every throw, until you have fished the entire water, each throw representing a radius to the quarter of a circle, when you can take a step or two farther up the stream and repeat the process.

Now, this is the way to fish a stream thoroughly when you are, as it were, searching for fish and do not know the stream or where they may come up, but if the fish are rising fairly it is a needless waste of time. Cast, then, over the rising fish, and fish over the likely spots, and don't dwell upon barren water. In casting over a rising fish be careful *not to put the line across him*, as the sight of the whole of the casting line coming down immediately over his head will not increase his confidence. Throw beside and above him, and allow him to see as much as he likes of the fly and as little as possible of the line. In Plate VI, page 93, the Fig. 3 is the right way and

Fig. 2 the wrong. If a fish rises, a slight upward or downward turn of the wrist will be sufficient to fix the hook, and here, as in spinning, the downward strike is preferable, but beware of striking too hard, the lightest twitch is not only sufficient but far the best. As to giving any direct rules when to strike, they would be of little avail, as sometimes fish rise quickly and take quickly; sometimes with more circumspection, and sometimes altogether falsely—practice alone will teach the angler what to do, and how and when to do it.

And now a word or two about the much discussed point as to fishing up-stream or down, though what there is to discuss in it, or how any difference of opinion can exist, I cannot understand. The angler should never fish down-stream if he can by any possibility fish up. The fish lie with their heads up-stream. They see the flies coming down towards them and they rise to meet them. The angler is far behind them, and of course they are not so likely to see him. If a fish takes the fly fairly then the angler will, if he strikes properly, hardly ever miss his fish, because he pulls the fly towards, and as it were into, the fish's mouth, whereas in fishing down he will perpetually pull it out of his mouth; added to this, in fishing down every fish for twenty yards can see him coming, and the best will cease rising and take shelter under some weed. Again, if he hooks a good fish that requires play he must take it down over unfished ground disturbing every fish for some distance, or create much disturbance of the water and risk breaking the hold or the tackle. If the wind or the rapidity of the stream prevent the angler from casting directly up-stream, he should cast across and as well up as he can, and still let the fly float down until it becomes a tight line extended straight below him down-stream. But even then he should work up-stream if possible. But to cast down-stream and work the fly up against it is not *fly*-fishing. I do not, however, deny that plenty of fish may be killed so, but the number and size will be heavily in favour of up or cross-stream fishing. If the angler must fish down-stream he should still cast across and let the fly drift down, and if he must cast straight down let him cast rather short, keeping the rod pretty upright when the line is delivered, and as soon as the fly alights on the water, he can, by dropping the point as low as is convenient, still allow his fly to drop down-stream. If, however, he will cast down and draw up he will find it pay better, if having made his cast he lets the fly sink some inches under water, even to mid-water if he pleases, and then works it by gently rising and falling the top of the rod. It will then be taken for a larva, spider, or some other water insect, and he will thus improve his chance of sport. Indeed, I have known very good fishermen fish so and take very good fish.

Here is another wrinkle. To fish a stream to the best advantage in this way the angler should pick out a tolerably rapid one, get above it, and cast into the head of it, sinking and working his fly, and as he does so he should gradually foot by foot let out line, and in this way, without moving, he may fish down a run thirty or forty yards in length, and probably some very good fish will reward his efforts, but he will have to work them up against the stream and not let them go down, and he must strike at the slightest touch, for he will not *see* his rises. In fishing down, as the line is always tight, the angler must be very careful not to strike too hard. The lightest touch is enough, and a sharp stroke will part the tackle to a certainty, *particularly if the gut be dry and has been used much before.**

At night, however, the angler should always fish down, or rather across and down, or he will miss three-fourths of his rises owing to the slack line not giving him sufficiently quick intimation of the rise. Added to this, unless he makes too much disturbance, the fish will let him come within two or three yards of them, and the fish being usually on the watch *for any insect that moves,* no matter how or what, will take his fly boldly. But I shall recur to night-fishing hereafter. The question of fishing up or down, therefore, is, to a certain extent, a divided question, but the angler should always give the preference to fishing up. But in whatever style he fishes, as his art is one of clever deception, he should attend to and imitate nature as closely as possible.

In very windy weather. or in difficult places, 'midst trees and bushes, the angler will often have to employ other ways of casting. When the wind is blowing heavily down-stream or he has trees at his back, he will have to switch his line.†

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* It is surprising that the author should not have warned the beginner in fly-fishing for trout against holding a finger on the reel line. To do so in fishing with fine tackle, whether with wet or dry fly, is to render occasional fracture of the gut inevitable. On the other hand, in salmon fishing, the tackle being stronger and the hook larger, more force is required to bury the barb, and this is ensured by keeping a finger on the reel line.—Ed.

† This plan is more often adopted in salmon-fishing with the double-handed rod than in trouting, though in the latter it may at times be used with advantage.—F. F.

Raising the point of the rod high in the air, so as to lift as much of his line as possible clear of the water without lifting the fly altogether off the surface, he must make a sharp forward and downward cut, and the fly without going behind him at all will rise from the water and describe a large arc of a circle in the air towards the point he wishes. A wind at the back will much facilitate the making of this cast effectually. Occasionally he will meet with a piece of water where the trees are not only close at his back but where their branches stretch out over the water, often just above his head. This is usually tabooed ground, as not one fisher in a thousand can cast a fly in it. Here, however, " recubans sub tegmine," the largest trout lie, and therefore it is as well that the angler should take some trouble to learn how to fish such a spot. Now, suppose the branches to be some five feet only above the surface of the stream, and the banks well bushed. The angler must stoop down on one knee, extend the rod over the water, parallel to it, some eighteen inches above it—probably he will find it easier to fish it down-stream if at all rapid—and letting a line out about half as long again as the rod *with the fingers of the hand which grasps the rod turned downwards towards the water's surface*, the back of the hand being *upwards*—he must be particular about this, as the whole virtue of the cast lies in the peculiar position and the reversal of the hand—he must twitch the line sharply off the water and directly up the stream, being careful not to bring the point of the rod too far round, or the fly will catch the bushes on the bank on his own side, nor higher than suffices to fetch the line off the water, or he will take hold of the branches above it. When the line is fairly extended up-stream he may make his cast by bringing his hand back again over the same distance it has just travelled, but as he does so he must reverse the position of the fingers of his hand, these being brought upwards while the back of the hand is brought under towards the water. The whole secret of the cast lies in this turning over of the hand. If this be done properly, the angler can fish such spots safely, and can pitch his fly *fairly and lightly across* the stream, while in no other way that he can devise will he be able to do more than to cast it directly *down* the stream, or if it ever chances to go across, it will go with such a splash as will render the cast worse than useless, while he will be perpetually fouling in the branches above or catching on the surface of the water behind or up-stream. This cast is difficult to learn and requires much practice, but when once mastered the angler will find it of the greatest advantage, and he will be able to drop his fly just where he chooses. For this casting a stiff rod is decidedly requisite, or the angler will not be able to get his line quickly and cleanly enough off the surface when about to make his cast, for he does not *raise* it *directly off* the water, as in ordinary casting, but rather pulls it through it, and if the rod gave too much it would be brought so far round before the line was got off the water that the fly would catch in the bank.

I have now told the young fly-fisher how to suit himself with rod and tackle and how to fish a stream, and I will add a few general directions which have been gathered by long experience, watchfulness, and by thinking nothing which occurs on the water, or in connection with it, unworthy of notice or consideration. And, firstly, as to the weather when the angler should go fly-fishing, and these remarks very much apply to all other kinds of fishing. Most of us are aware of the old rhyme:—

When the wind blows from the west,
It blows the hook to the fish's nest;
When the wind blows from the south,
It blows the hook to the fish's mouth;
When from the north and east it blows,
Seldom the angler fishing goes.

My dear friends and pupils, don't believe it: if you possess a copy of this bit of ancient doggerel, let it be anything but a rule for your conduct. You may have sport in all winds and in all weathers, or you may not; as long as the wind is not too heavy and is *up-stream*, be sure that you have the best wind that can blow. I have had some of the best days I ever had in my life with a north or east wind, and some of the worst with a south or west one. Some will say, choose a cloudy day with the wind here or there, and some a rainy day with the wind nowhere; some say, never fish in thundery weather, whereas I have caught fish again and again, and known them caught, in all possible sorts of weather, even with the thunder cracking all round—nay, directly overhead. I do not believe there is any rule whatever that can be relied upon. I have had first-rate sport in a snow-storm ere now. The influences which cause fish to feed, or the reverse, are as much a mystery to us as they were to our forefathers. Fishes' appetites are doubtless somewhat like our own, they feed best when they are hungry, and when they can do so with the least fear. Fish feed at some time in the twenty-four hours, and be sure if they are not rising it is because there are no flies to tempt them. They are not starving by way of amusement, rely upon it, but have " metal more attractive " down below, in the shape of grubs, worms, larvæ, etc. No one perhaps would willingly select a bright hot day, with no wind and a low water, yet I have at times had excellent, nay the best of sport even, on such days. And few would choose a steely bright day with a cutting easterly wind, and little or no fly on the water ; but on two such days running I once, in Derbyshire, killed in the brightest possible water forty-six brace of capital trout each day. I could have killed more on the second day, but did not care to carry them, and I have often had good sport on similar days ; some of the best days I have had this season (1867) were on bitterly cold days with a north-east wind, and little or no fly on ; and some of the worst on warm cloudy days with a south and south-west wind and plenty of fly. Upon the other hand, how often will the angler go out upon a day which he would have picked out from the whole year, had he the choice, and do little or nothing. There are some days, nice, brisk, cloudy days, with a steady breeze, and not too much fly, and the water in good order, which the angler may pretty well count upon as being good days, and be seldom deceived, though he may sometimes even then ; but as to picking out a day when he can be sure that the fish will not feed, it is beyond his skill. He may of course chance to be right and he may chance to be wrong, and the longer he is a fisherman the more he will discover that he does not know how a day may turn out until he turns out his creel at night. It not unfrequently happens that some very slight and unexpected change will take place, some new fly will begin to hatch out, or some other insect will put in an appearance, which sets all the fish feeding suddenly, and will thus afford him an hour or two's capital sport, turning a bad day into a good one. My advice to the young angler is, always carry your mackintosh, be patient and persevering, and leave the weather to take care of itself. As regards a bright, hot, still day, although I do not say that I should prefer such a day, yet I would not go far out of my way to avoid it if the water be in fair order ; on a similar day last year I caught in the Kennet (which is one of the hardest streams to kill a dish of trout in that I know) six and a half brace of trout, several of them up to two pounds, and one of nearly four—they were caught with a good-sized alder ; and often in just the same weather have I had capital sport with the cocktail in the Wandle, and that is by no means an easy stream either to kill fish on in such weather. And if the fish do not rise well in the hot day, they generally make up for it in the evening. Yet, so uncertain is angling, that even here the angler may reckon without his host, for after such a day a fog may get up when (and this is almost the only tolerably certain rule that I know of in respect to weather) the trout almost invariably cease feeding. I have tried hard to account for this, and I think it may be that the fog is caused by evaporation induced by the sudden cold upon the water warmed by the hot sun ;* that this sudden chill, evidenced by the evaporation, checks the hatching and development of the flies, and the fish are stopped from rising in consequence of the absence of fly. I have reason to believe, however, that the change by no means prevents their feeding on the bottom, and at such time ground food will not be refused. Fish will not feed either in a rapidly falling water, and if there be mills on the stream they will often spoil the best evening's sport by drawing down the water ; at such a time the only chance an angler will have of a fish will be in some snug corner, under an overhanging bank—in the open stream his efforts will be fruitless.

There are, however, many extraneous circumstances which have much to do with the feeding of our fish and which the angler will have to take into consideration, and which affect rather disastrously many of our best streams, as sheep-washing, mine water, drainage, etc., and by which the likeliest day, nay, the likeliest week, may be seriously damaged. Last season I had two splendid days at the May fly spoilt by sheep-washing, and this season I had my best day spoilt. All that can be said upon weather as a guide is but of a very general and imperfect nature. One or two points may be accepted which are more often to be relied on than not, which is all that can be said of them ; for example : Fish will not rise, or if rising will not take well, when heavy clouds are coming up or when heavy rain portends, or a flood threatens. They seem to have some instinctive notion that much water is coming, and that there

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* The cause of evening fog upon a river in summer is the reverse of what is here suggested. The air, warmed by the day's sunshine, is charged with vapour derived from evaporation and carried in an invisible state till the air meets the chill from the water, when the vapour is suddenly condensed into minute particles of water, each of which reflects light, rendering the air opaque. A similar effect is created by grinding a piece of clear glass into opaque white powder.—Ed.

Dry Fly Water on the Test.

To face Page 121.

A White Trout Stream, Ballinahinch.

is a grand feast preparing and they reserve themselves for it. Dead low water is not, as a rule, desirable. Sudden and violent changes of weather are not favourable to good takes, neither are extremes of weather favourable, as excessive wind, rain, heat, or cold. Frost will not always deter them if there be warm glimpses of weather at mid-day; but with frost, evenings and mornings are not to be relied on. The angler should never go out on the day after a flood; a flood always brings down much food, and the fish are generally gorged and lazy. If the water clears well the day after may be a good day; If it clears slowly, the day after that will be found even better.

Fish do not always lie in the same spots when feeding; much depends upon the weather. The angler should remember that the fish always—particularly in larger streams—follow the food; * according, therefore, to the weather let him study which part of a run or stream is likely to contain the most food, for here he will assuredly find the most and best fish. In a flood, the fish will be all over the river feeding, and he will take fish in spots which it would be utterly useless to fish when the river is down to its natural level again. The neck of every little run between two stones or weeds, the eye or eddy in each stream, will then have its feeding fish. The eye of the stream, I may take occasion to say, is *always* the most favourable spot for fish. By the eye I mean the first good eddy *on the inside* of any stream after it commences its shoot. Into this almost every straw or insect is swept in its downward course, to be delivered up to the stream again after it has made a revolution or two, perhaps a yard or so lower down, and here the fish are on the watch for food. In hot bright weather, the fish will be at the tails of the pools, on the gravelly shallows, more often sunning themselves than feeding, however. Still the angler, by letting his fly work down from the head of the stream to the end, may perhaps pick up a fish, but the hooking of one fish will be the signal for all the rest to rush up into safety and deep water. In hot weather, too, the best fish may be observed under the deep shades of overhanging boughs, lying within an inch or two of the surface, and merely lifting their noses very quietly to the top, as fly, beetle, or grub comes floating to them. Whenever the angler sees a fish rising in such a spot, do not let him be deluded by the very slight disturbance it makes in rising into the belief that it is a small fish ; nine times in ten it is a good fish, and often a superior one and worth all the caution and skill he can use, and in such spots, if the angler can get his bait properly to the fish, he will mostly take. In windy weather, always fish the bank towards which the flies are blown, for close to, almost touching, the bank the big trouts will be often picking the struggling flies off the sedges or grass as they try to escape. You cannot then fish too close to the bank.

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* In small brooks a good trout takes up his berth, which is generally a likely one for the run of the food, and does not wander far from it. The stream is his purveyor. In larger rivers they are more of wanderers and have to follow the food, while every flood will alter the currents and runs.—F. F.

In fishing a stream when the fish are rising under the opposite bank, if the angler can make his fly touch the bank, or even rest upon it, so that it will drop lightly or rather be swept off into the water, it will be found a very killing method ; but this requires to be done with great caution, lest the fly take hold of anything. Short grass, earthy banks, or rocks are the most preferable substances on which to practise this feat. Should the angler, when throwing close to bushes, hang his fly up to a branch or spray, let him not use any violence in trying to get it off again ; a very gentle pull will often cause the fly to come off and even to unwind itself from any twig it may have lapped round and to drop into the water safely (when haply a rise and a good fish may reward the angler's gentleness), whereas a sharp tug would probably have fixed the fly in the obstruction inextricably, and a breakage have ensued. Try a steady pull but not a hard one ; if this fails, a short sharp stroke will sometimes save the tackle, but always try gentleness first, for " persuasion is better than force." Some trees the angler can venture, and with comparative safety, to throw closer to than others, the smooth hanging shape of the leaves and brittleness of the twigs being less dangerous ; but beware of oak or hawthorn, a fixture in either is all but a certain smash. He may venture to throw close to flags, almost with impunity, for if the hook take hold they will generally split from bottom to top ; some rushes are also tolerably safe, but a flowering rush or reed hath knots in it through which no hook will go. When a breakage is necessary, do not strain the rod ; but wind up all the line you possibly can, and then take an almost straight pull on it.

The fisherman should look behind him from time to time as he works along the banks of a stream ; should he neglect this and get hung up in some tall tree behind him, he will be more likely to get fixed than when throwing across, because of the heavy drag given to the fly in the forward motion. To provide against mischances of this nature, it is as well to carry a coil of stoutish cord in the pocket or basket; this takes up little or no room, and by tying a stone on to one end of it and throwing over the offending branch, and then twisting the depending stone round and round the length held in the hand, the bough may generally be pulled down or even broken off. Some anglers carry one of those little hook-shaped knives which have a barbed gaff hook on the reverse side, and which can be screwed into the butt of the landing-handle. These are useful in cutting free a weed or twig which may be within reach; but it often happens that the handle is not long enough to reach high up into a tree, and therefore the coil of cord is to my mind preferable—at any rate it is a useful adjunct.

When the angler hooks a fish in a very weedy place, the best policy is a bold one. Let him at once, before the fish is aware of what has happened to him, put on a heavy drag, and pull him through or over the weeds into safe water. I assure the angler that this is much easier and safer than it either sounds or looks. It is one thing for the angler to *take* a fish through weeds, but quite another thing for the fish to take himself through them. In the one case he does not see where he is going and yields to the impulse, while his fins offer no resistance; in the other, these circumstances are reversed, and he holds the weeds by his outspread fins and often also by his mouth. This last season I was frequently obliged to exert my persuasive powers in this respect, as I was fishing a good deal in a very weedy river; and one day, to the great astonishment of the keeper, I hauled four fish, one after the other, out of very dangerous holes through heavy weeds into safe water, and landed them; three of them weighed one pound and three-quarters each, and the fourth two pounds. "Never see anyone so lucky as you be, sir, wi' big fish, don't seem to care 'bout the weeds, not a mossel," said the keeper; and certainly some of the places were as nasty-looking places to hook a good fish in as anyone could desire to see; but prompt measures succeeded where a timid and hesitating hand on the rod would have been sure, sooner or later, to have ended in the fish bolting into a weed of his own accord. Should a fish run up under a weed, in his efforts to escape, it is manifest, if the angler pulls against the stream and the lay of the weed, or even endeavours to pull the fish up through the weed, or sideways out of it, that he will fail. The only way to extricate such a fish when he has succeeded in hanging your tackle up, is to get well below him, let out a longish line, sink the point of the rod to the level of the water, and put a steady strain on straight down-stream. The fish may perhaps for a time be able to resist this strain, but patience and perseverance will fetch him out at last ; even if he has gripped the weed in his mouth, as fish will do, he must open his mouth eventually, particularly as he has the fly in it straining and pulling at him. I do not say that this plan is always successful, but it more often is than not, while to attempt to pull the fish against or across the weed is almost certain destruction ; a gentle sawing motion may at times be used with excellent effect, if the angler has reason to suppose that the weed hangs at all on the line. Poking or stoning a fish out is a very uncertain remedy, and, unless you can see and manage the weed very well, cutting or hooking it up is unsafe, and sometimes results in cutting the line. There is one thing the angler must remember in fishing weedy water, and that is to eschew the use of a dropper ; for if his trout takes to weed, towing a stretcher or dropper fly after him, the angler's chance is of the smallest.

As in bait-fishing so in fly-fishing, the angler should always make a mental note of any good fish he may see, and take careful stock of his lying-ground, and any obstruction, bushes, etc. ; and study how he may best be fished for, in order that he may know, without being obliged again to look at him, or even to come within sight of him, how to fish when he again passes his lair. If he does so, he can then approach without exposing himself in any way to the watchful fish, knowing at the same time exactly when and how to cast. In casting, he should also bear in mind that the first time a fly passes over a fish is far more likely to be successful than any subsequent cast which he can make, and consequently he cannot use too much care or caution in making it neat and effective. Let him be sure, therefore, by a wide cast or two away from the fish, that his line and fly are in good order, and then let him make his cast with all the care and skill he is capable of ; and nine times in ten the cast will be lucky.

I always like to illustrate my advice if I can from actual experience, and I will do so now. Some years ago I was fishing the Duke of Rutland's water on the Lathkill : I was approaching a bridge, when the keeper came up, and as we were conversing, he pointed to a fish rising just at the mouth of the bridge-arch. " Now, sir," said he, " there is a fish that's worth catching. He's a sort of a pet of mine; scores of people have tried for that fish, but he's too artful for them. Give him a try, sir." I looked at the spot; the fish was rising regularly, sucking in every fly that came down; but I had no doubt that he could see us perfectly where we stood, as the water was entirely open, and the fish could not be approached from below, without one's being seen. It was evident that he always was thus fished for; and as, when he rose, he could see everything for thirty yards or more away, the instant a line fell on the water of course he was up under the bridge out of harm's way. I shook my head, and declined to make a spectacle of myself for the keeper's amusement; but I took a look at the place, both above and below bridge, and told the keeper, perhaps half in bravado, that I would catch his fish as I returned. The keeper grinned mighty incredulously, and, having pocketed his tip, wished me good morning. Now, just above the bridge, and certainly not above five or six feet or so above it, there was a fall or dam of some two or three feet, and as I looked at it, it struck me that I might, by management, get my fly over the fish without his seeing me. On my return, therefore, I stopped wide of the bridge, and above it; and after measuring the distance carefully by one of two preliminary casts, I cast as far as possible over towards the farther side of the arch, in the space between the fall and the bridge, and giving all the line I could, I let it sweep round under the arch, chancing the fact of the trout being at home, as I did not dare to look. Sure enough he was at home, and just as my fly was sweeping down towards a straight line I felt a gentle touch, which I answered with a turn of the wrist, and a nice time I had of it, for up he bolted into the fall, and a pretty jiggering match he gave me. Finding that I was not to be trifled with, he rushed down under the arch, but it was of no use, for in due time I basketed him, and I had hardly done so and moved onwards, when the keeper came towards me again. I saw him glance at the place where the fish usually rose: "Ah," I said, "it's of no use for you to look there for him, keeper; you'll never see him make circles *there* any more. I told you I'd catch him, and here he is." The keeper looked at the fish, and his bump of veneration, I could see, was greatly enlarged. Evidently he thought me a dangerous customer, and well he might, for I made his finny charges stand and deliver to a very considerable amount before I felt left them. I never told him how I had circumvented his pet, but I found out that my suspicions as to how it had always been fished for were correct.

Yes; there is nothing pays better with good fish than a little careful preliminary study of their territory. Never fish them rashly or without due consideration, or you do more harm than good. If a good fish rises at the fly and refuses it, you should not cast again immediately; give him a few minutes' rest to recover himself, and take advantage of any cloud or puff of wind that may occur when you throw again. If he again comes short, give him another rest, and try a dry fly over him; it that fails let the fly sink well six or eight inches, or even more, under water, and if that does not succeed, either change the fly or leave him—the latter for choice.

If fish are rising short, rolling over the fly, or flapping at it with their tails to drown it, oblige them at once by letting it sink, and your attention to their wishes will often be rewarded. To show the advantage at times of sinking the fly, I will relate a circumstance.

Fishing in Hampshire some time since, on the Earl of Portsmouth's water, I had had very indifferent sport all the morning, for although there was a good breeze on, and a fair show of fly (yellow dun), the fish appeared to take very badly, though they rose well enough. I had cast my fly into the water, and having to light my pipe, I allowed the fly to sink to the bottom; when I recommenced, I raised the point of the rod to withdraw the tackle, but the line was too long and dragged, and I fancied it had taken hold of a weed. I then took the line in by hand, and found that, instead of being caught in a weed, the fly had been picked up by a good fish. I struck him with the hand and eventually killed him. The hint was not lost on me: I had thrown over a good fish some seven yards above, not five minutes before, and he had risen and refused; I now cast over him again, and allowed the fly to sink to mid-water, when he took it directly, and I killed him. I then tried some other fish, which I had previously been fishing over futilely; and, following the same plan, I rose and hooked six brace of capital fish of from one and a quarter to two pounds each, killing four brace of them, and losing two brace owing to my hook having sprung in striking a good fish on some bony part of the mouth. I had only killed two small fish during the whole of the morning previously. The fish were evidently feeding either upon drowned flies (though these would hardly sink I fancy) or upon larvæ.

I may state here, that in deep pools or mill heads, no plan is so killing as to suffer the fly to sink to the bottom, and then to work it with short sharp shoots up to the surface. Whether the fish mistake it for the larva of some fly, or some other water-insect, or a fly striving to get to the surface, or what they may suppose it to be I cannot say. I only know that this is a very killing plan; and many a good dish of fish have I picked up thus, when I could not coax a single fish to come up to the surface. In calm or hot weather it is a capital dodge.* If there is too much stream, bite a shot on the gut at the head of the fly, and, if it savour not too much of taking a mean advantage put a gentle on the hook; and if the proprietor of the water does not look upon it as poaching—as " aiblins " he may—you will perhaps not regret the addition.

When the angler strikes a good fish at all heavily, and loses it, he should always *look* at his hook. Had I done so, when fishing as above, I should have saved two brace of good fish. The hook will sometimes be found to have lost the fine point and sometimes to be bent outwards; and this is usually caused by its hitting obliquely on a bone. When the first occurrence takes place, a touch from a fine needle file will put a fresh point on; but in the second case the fly is useless, and no bending the hook back to its place will render it either serviceable or reliable. Off with it, and put on another, and lest it may chance by any oversight to be put on again, break the fly off and throw it away, or, if the pattern be needed, break the hook.

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* I had somewhat disheartening proof of this some years ago when I was one of six anglers who rented the Avington water of the Itchen. I took the late Mr. Ashley Dodd to fish with me one day (the rules of our association allowed a member to introduce a friend after 1st September). We took separate beats, agreeing to meet for luncheon at a place which those who know that delectable part of the river will recognise under the name of the Aquarium. I managed with much difficulty to secure a brace of trout on a red quill; when we met Mr. Dodd produced either two or three brace, I forget which, of fine fish. I asked what fly they had taken. "Oh," said he, " I soon gave up the floating fly. I did them with this," holding out a huge red palmer with two hooks in it. Quoth I, " You've been raking the hatch holes." He assured me he had not, but had caught his fish on the open river.

Just opposite where we were sitting there was a good trout, not rising, but poised in a likely attitude. I had floated the quill over him twenty times or more, without exciting the faintest response. I bade my friend try him with his furry monster. He put out a long line, flung the thing in some yards above the fish, let it sink and brought it past him with a jerking motion. The trout turned, dashed at the lure, missed it and returned to his poise. A second cast, and he was hooked and landed, one pound and three-quarters. I am bound to say that the performance put me somewhat out of conceit with dry-fly fishing.—Ed.

I have mentioned fishing with the dry fly, and it is at times an invaluable method. With the dry fly, fish may be killed on fine bright days, when the wet fly will be almost useless. If the angler on a bright calm day will notice the class of flies called duns, he will see how, when first hatched, they come floating down with wings upright and unsoiled, sitting lightly and cockily on the water—tempting morsels to the greedy fish. Few flies are then to be found in a wet, half-drowned condition, and therefore, if the angler sends one thus to the fish, it is frequently neglected. Taking, then, two or three turns of the fly in the air instead of one, so as to dry the tackle, let him deliver the fly straightly and well a yard above the fish, and merely raising his rod, as the line comes home, allow the fly, sustained by the dry hackle and wing and by the dry gut, to float down on the surface like the natural fly, without motion. If the gut be delivered in a wavy manner, the bends and turns in it will show a glitter and startle the fish; if the angler attempts to draw the fly towards him, it will "make snakes," and the dry gut will appear like a huge centipede crawling on the water. Perfect quiescence is required. It is quite wonderful at times what can be done under apparently adverse circumstances with a dry fly, no weather and no water being proof against it.*

The judicious and perfect application of dry, wet, and mid-water fly-fishing stamps the finished fly-fisher with the hall-mark of efficiency. Generally, anglers pin their faith to the entire practice of either one or the other plan, and argue dry *versus* wet, just as they do up-stream *versus* down, when all are right at times, and *per contra*, all wrong at times. It requires the reasoning faculties to be used to know these times and their application. As a rule rough weather is the more favourable to a sunk or wet fly, while bright and calm weather favours the dry one. Indeed, if there be much ripple on, a dry fly can hardly be maintained.

It often happens that a fish will lie in some hole or corner under overhanging bushes, where it would be impossible for the angler to put the fly over the fish by casting it directly to him; but let him not be discouraged and pass the fish by.

* Since this was written dry-fly fishing has become practically the exclusive method on chalk streams, and is frequently practised on northern waters only. The fly is usually anointed with paraffin from a phial attached to a button of the angler's coat; but a far more convenient plan is to anoint the flies before going out. The oil dries very quickly on them and the flies remain *permanently* waterproof.—Ed.

A trout usually rests where the hang and eddy of the stream will give him the best chance of the greatest amount of provender with the least amount of trouble, and very often the angler will see, by carefully studying the spot, that by pitching a fly (dry perhaps is best) well above the fish, and letting the stream take it where it will, the eddy will do for it what the angler could not, and will at any rate bring it within sight. A fly thus brought to a fish is almost certain to be taken, provided you do nothing glaringly wrong, because, in the first place, the fish usually takes every fly that comes, and, secondly, he seldom or never sees an artificial fly in that spot. I know of nothing so agreeable in fly-fishing as the outwitting one of these cunning old stay-at-homes, who, having gotten to themselves good fat places—archidiaconal stalls, with only archidiaconal functions attached to them—fancy they have a vested interest in them, and that they are to be safe sinecures for ever. I once took five such fish in one morning on the Arrow, and they were all extra good fish, and not one of them would many anglers have thought it worth while trying for. It was a bit of fishing which I have always felt rather proud of. Indeed, nineteen times in twenty, a fish feeding in his lair or under a branch will rise and take better than a fish in the open water in mid-stream.

It is quite needless to say that the angler should avoid showing himself to the fish as much as possible, and should always take advantage of any bush or tree which may easily afford him a screen ; when the banks are too open to the river, he should even go down upon one knee—nay, I have known good service done by an angler lying prone upon his stomach. In many places and streams it is quite impossible for anyone to approach within casting distance of the stream in an erect position without seeing every trout for some distance rushing off to his hiding-place. In places of this description, the angler will find much service in sticking a loose bush or two into the ground in a favourable spot, should he design to come there again the next day ; and he should always bear this in mind, that the higher up in the air he is the more likely the trout is to see him. Shy fish will often take alarm at the angler as he comes along the bank, even while he is twenty or thirty yards away ; but if he could get down on a level with the water, with the bank at his back, so that his head did not appear above the sky line, they would not appear to see him at all, and would take the fly without hesitation, provided no sudden or violent motion were made to attract attention. Height, therefore, is not an advantage, and wading *up-stream* (provided no disturbance be made in the water) is.

With regard to dress, some people are inclined to ridicule the idea of there being any necessity for attending to it at all. I am very sure, however, that excellent grounds exist for not being too conspicuous in this respect. The trout is a very gentlemanly fish, and does not like loud dressing; positive black and white, too, or anything which glitters or is unusual, should be carefully eschewed, particularly on the upper and more conspicuous part of the person. A tall black hat, or one of the genus called "shiner" I do not recommend; and though I would rather fish in the Bishop of Winchester's stream than in his lordship's company when in full canonicals, I should equally consider Mr. Chadband in his cerements an objectionable party for successful trouting on a shy or well-fished stream; while a stage coachman in a white top-coat and shiny hat would be fully as unacceptable. I even dislike a highly varnished rod. Who has not seen the flash of a rod waving in the air when half a mile distant? and surely so unusual and startling a phenomenon cannot but be calculated to disturb the equanimity of so sharp-eyed a creature as the trout. The angler must not always consider, because the spot where a trout lies is apparently out of the direct range of his vision, that therefore he is invisible to the trout; because, owing to the refraction of the rays of light consequent on their passing from the rarer medium of air into the denser medium of water, the direct line of vision becomes broken on reaching the water, and takes a much more perpendicular direction. The reader will understand this by placing a coin in an empty pan, so far out of the line of sight as to be hidden by the side of the vessel, and then filling the pan with water, when the coin previously hidden will be plainly visible. The same thing of course takes place inversely with respect to the fish seeing the fisher, with this remarkable difference, that the line is still farther diverted from the direct line of vision, and therefore the fish can see at a greater angle of divergence than the fisherman, and consequently a fish lying under a bank between the angler and himself can often see his enemy, when by no possibility could the angler see him.

It is as well that the angler should bear this little bit of science in mind, as it will often account for a fish not rising, when every other reason fails. Owing to this peculiarity, a fish can to a certain extent see behind him as it were, and can take in a much wider scope of objects than a cursory consideration would give him credit for, and the more so as his eye is peculiarly adapted to his element in this respect, as affording him increased facilities for seeing his way to a living in the world. The organ of sight is the chief one upon which fish rely, and is much more keenly developed than any other. Feeling is probably the next sense in proportionate development, as the nervous organisation of fish is usually rather full and perfect, and the slightest vibration in the water is felt by them apparently instantaneously. Taste and smell are no doubt also tolerably acute, but I do not think hearing is of so much consequence to them as some of the other senses; though the angler will not find a loud or unusual noise in any way advantageous to him.

The size of flies to be used must be regarded by the water to be fished to some extent, but it is as common a fault to fish with too small flies as it is to use too large ones. On very well preserved and much-fished streams, as the Wandle, for example, very small flies are the favourite cast, but I have often seen a coarser one, with larger flies, beat it hollow; particularly if a little wind prevails. The angler should, if he finds his small flies useless, try a size or two larger, and sink them a few inches.

I will now give a few simple and useful directions as to night-fishing, but I may premise that I wish night-fishing were generally abandoned, for I believe it materially injures the day-fishing, by rendering the fish much more shy than they would naturally be if only fished for in the day-time. There ought to be some period during the twenty-four hours when the trout can feed safely without disturbance or the fear of a hook before them; but as fly-fishing is now conducted there is not; and this naturally makes the fish suspicious of every lure, while big trout get so shy that they seldom, in small streams, get into really good condition at all. Unfortunately where night-fishing has been practised it is useless, after June, to fish until late in the evening, unless in very favourable weather indeed.

For night-fishing, the fewer flies the angler uses the better. He should never use more than two under any circumstances, and even one is better, as the slightest hitch or tangle, which in the daylight would be of no consequence, becomes fatal in the dark. It is desirable always to put up two casts, a spare one for a change being round the hat. These casts need not be long, a yard and a half of gut for one fly, and two yards for two, is quite long enough; any gut does, and it is as well to use it reasonably stout and coarse, as very little play or law should be given to the fish at night, as the angler cannot see obstructions. If a change of flies be desired, let them be so placed on the angler's hat that he can with certainty pick out the fly he requires without the necessity for examining it; and as it is almost impossible to undo loops in the dark, the fly should be dressed on a plain strand of gut, and the end of the casting-line left unlooped, so that the fly can be knotted on at once, this being a process which you manage pretty well by feeling. When the fly is to come off it must be broken off, and the fresh one tied on in its place.

As I have said, always fish with a tight line, that is, rather down-stream in the dark. If the angler fishes up-stream there is every chance of a slack line, when he will not feel the rise. All must be done by feeling; for though occasionally, if the fish takes boldly, a rise may be seen, it generally happens that the best rises, or rather those of the best fish, are very unobtrusive affairs, and the notice given to the rod point is so slight that the angler may, if he fancies it is the touch of a fish at all, set it down to some trumpery three-ounce flibbertigibbet instead of that noble three-pounder he gazed at for an hour off the bridge, with such a desire for a nearer acquaintance. Fish, therefore, rather across, and let the line go steadily down until it is extended, striking at every touch. Good large flies are *usually* required at night, though this is not always the case, if a strong rise of some small insect be on; but *more often* than not, one of the moths or the alder, cinnamon, sedge, or some good sized fly will be used, and as the hook will be a largish one, a firm stroke and a sharp course of treatment are desirable, as the less "bobbery" made, and the less time wasted, the better. Pop them into the basket; and though I advise no hurry, yet let no time be wasted. If the angler has any doubt about the state of his flies, he should never fish a moment in doubt, but run the cast through his hand. A short cast is the best; too long a line is unmanageable and uncertain at night, and there is no need for it, as the fish will, if you conduct yourself quietly, rise close to you—indeed, I have often, when wading, seen them rise within a yard or so of my legs. The fish which are most likely to take well are those which get in close under the banks. They are old soldiers, and pick a bellyful of insects almost off the long grass, scarcely rising at all; while the fish which rise in the mid-stream and make such a pother are for the most part but middling or little ones. Fish the banks, therefore, carefully, for even if you do not see or hear a rise anywhere, there is always hope under the bank. At night, a fly drawn against the stream will be taken almost as readily as one floating down—which of course is not the case by day. It is seldom so dark but that the angler can see a little ; and, although he will not detect perhaps the exact rise, yet he will see a slight ripple, which will be sufficient to guide his fly to the right spot. If, however, he cannot see the rise, let him listen carefully, and now and then he will hear a faint tinkle like the falling of a big water-drop ; that is the rise of a trout, and his ear must then guide him to the right spot. He will often hear a " suck," like a slobbery kiss ; that is not a trout feeding but an eel. How to get the exact distance of line required I cannot lay down any rule for, but judgment and practice alone will help him. One thing it is very advisable not to do, and that is, when he has got out a length of line which he works well, to lengthen or shorten it. In some places now they go to the length of fishing with a dry fly at night-time. This, I confess, evidences a civilisation and progress on the part of the trout which I cannot understand at all.

CHAPTER VI

ARTIFICIAL FLIES

Contrast of Systems—Copying Nature and Copying Nothing—List of Flies for each Month.

BEFORE entering upon the description of the necessary flies for the angler's use, I shall give a reference to the numbers of the flies in Plate VIII; as in my first edition some difficulty was experienced by anglers and tackle makers in the way of identifying each fly.

1. Is the Green Drake or May Fly (p. 161).
2. The Grey Drake or transformation of the Green Drake (p. 166).
3. The March Brown or Cob Fly of Wales (p. 146).
4. The Blue Dun, known by a great variety of names, given in its description (p. 143).
5. The Red Spinner, the transformation of the Blue Dun (p. 144).
6. The Yellow Dun (p. 151).
7. The Iron Blue Dun (p. 152).
8. The Evening Dun (p. 160).
9. The Little Blue Dun, Sky Blue, etc. (p. 160).
10. The August Dun (p. 172).
11. The Stone Fly (p. 158).
12. The February Red, Red Fly (p. 143).
13. The Willow Fly (p. 174).
14. The Sand Fly (p. 157).
15. The Alder or Orl Fly (p. 160).
16. The Cinnamon (p. 173).
17. The Gravel Bed, Spider Fly, etc. (p. 156).
18. The Hawthorn Fly (p. 156).
19. The Silver Horns (p. 172).
20. The Coch y bondu, etc. (p. 167).
21. The Fern Fly, Soldier Fly, etc. (p. 167).
22. The Wren Tail, Brown Bent, etc. (p. 170).

In giving a list of artificial flies I shall as much as possible eschew all flies which I do not know from experience to be

PLATE VIII.

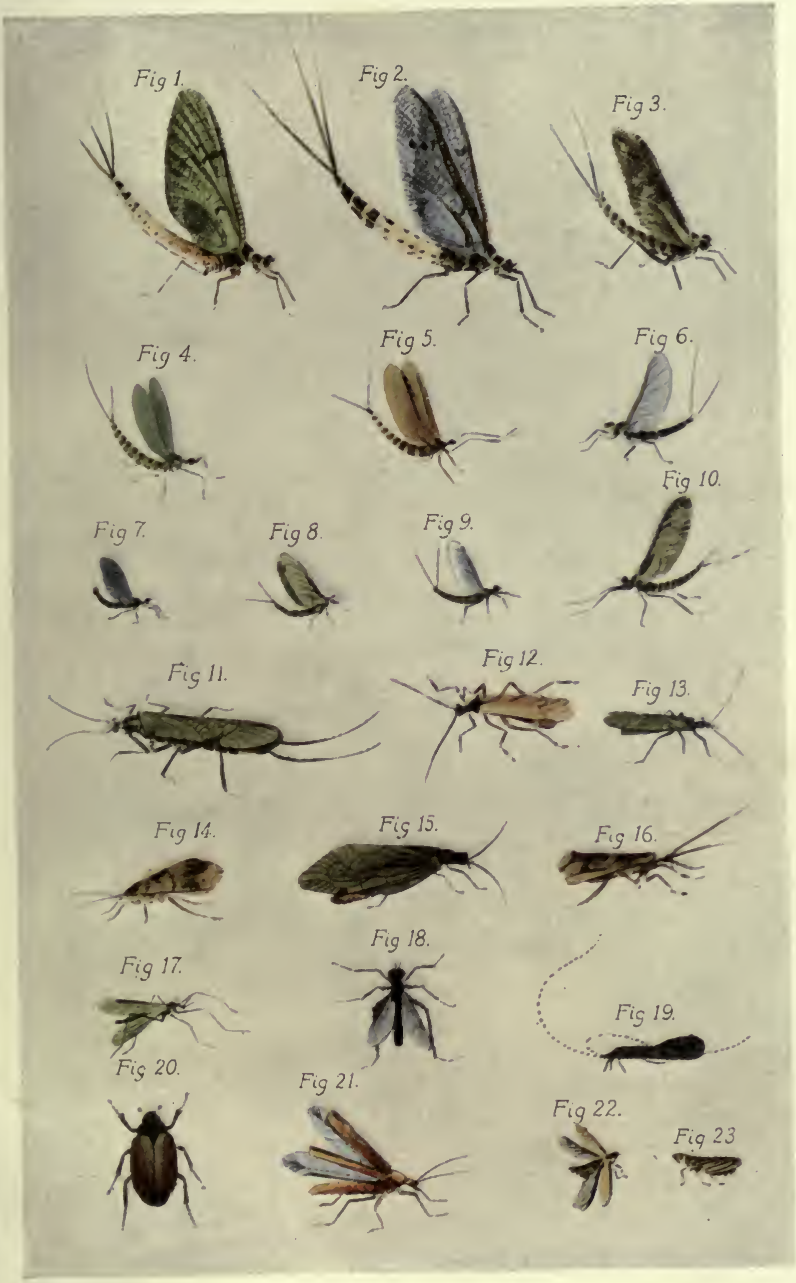
Fig 1.
Fig 2.
Fig 3.
Fig 4.
Fig 5.
Fig 6.
Fig 7.
Fig 8.
Fig 9.
Fig 10.
Fig 11.
Fig 12.
Fig 13.
Fig 14.
Fig 15.
Fig 16.
Fig 17.
Fig 18.
Fig 19.
Fig 20.
Fig 21.
Fig 22.
Fig 23

To face Page 134.

NATURAL TROUT FLIES.

useful to the angler. There are scores of flies which are set down in lists, and which are perpetuated from list to list, being copied from one to the other—like the celebrated "Hampstead Eye" butterfly, of which there is only a legend of a solitary specimen—but which are by no means to be generally relied upon. Such flies I shall have nothing to do with.

There are two conflicting systems, in support of which we find warm partisans and good anglers on either side, viz. the entomological and what may be termed the colorological system, or those who study and imitate nature as closely as possible and those who say "the day is bright and the water clear, or the day is cloudy and the water coloured, and therefore such and such colours *ought* to kill." I shall touch upon their respective merits and claims. Throughout the kingdom thousands of trout flies are in use, and almost any fly or insect which can fall upon the water will at times, if it be little fished, be taken by the trout. On the other hand, the reverse of this is more often true, and the trout are picksome and hard to please. It will often, too, occur, when trout are feeding strongly upon a particular fly, that they will take something entirely different in preference to a bad imitation of the insect they are feeding on, or even a fair imitation put over them in a somewhat different way from those which are passing over them, because the one does not challenge comparison while the other does, from which the *colorologists* argue that it is not necessary to trouble your head with considerations of what is on the water. But there are times, again, when the fish will be rising furiously, and the angler may exhaust his tackle book over them without getting a rise if he has not the exact fly. I could cite hundreds of instances of this. I mention only one, the most recent I can call to mind.

Last season I was fishing the Itchin, at Bishopstoke ; it was getting towards dusk, the fish came on to rise very rapidly, fly after fly did I try, in the very thickest of the boils, covering half a dozen fish at every cast ; every likely fly I could think of was tried and rejected, and not a single rise could I get ; the fly they were rising at was a very small one, but, small as it was, they knew perfectly well the difference between it and others of the same size, even though it was evening. By great difficulty I got one of the flies, and saw it was a red spinner. I was able to find a red spinner without much trouble, and in less than twenty minutes I had two and a half brace of fine fish, when the rise was over. The general principles so much favoured by our friends in the north, in their selection of flies, would have been utterly useless here. There is no doubt that a general selection of a dozen flies (upon the principles advocated by the author of *The Practical Angler*, Mr. Stewart) for the entire season, makes very easy work of it, and the angler is not much puzzled as to selection. Such a system may suit the northern rivers, but, upon our well-whipped southern streams, where the trout are exceedingly wary and well-educated, the fish like a little more attention paid to their fancies ; and we are obliged, too, to pay that attention, because we have not generally those resources in minnow, worm, and larva fishing to fall back upon, when we fail with the fly, which our brothers over the border practise, for upon our best streams they are not allowed, and we are restricted to artificial fly-fishing. I do not doubt for one moment that Mr. Stewart's flies—I select Mr. Stewart, not as the originator perhaps, but as the exponent of a system—I say I do not doubt that Mr. Stewart's flies kill well at times, because the best of them very strongly resemble some of the best flies that are found on pretty well every river in the kingdom as duns, spinners, midges, and those very general favourites, the sand and cinnamon flies. Then Mr. Stewart has two imitations, called the red and black spider, and there are two water insects, a red and black spider, which I have often caught in my entomological wanderings, which are widely distributed, and which these imitations also resemble. Now, I apprehend that it is only because these combinations of fur and feather in some sort resemble the flies which the fish are in the habit of seeing on the water, that the fish take them at all. This must be conceded ; if it be not, why does the fly-fisher adhere to the form, colour, and size of those flies at all ? Why have they wings and legs and bodies like flies ? Why are they of the same size ? Why does he not fish with a bunch of feathers of any colour, and tied on anyhow ? Why should he have any choice in the matter ? Why even have a dozen flies ? and why should one kill one day and not another ? It is clear that he has a choice and a variety because the fish have, and he finds it necessary to "pander to their base tastes and fancies" to some extent. His art is unquestionably a deception, and he must allow that he is deceiving the fish with the imitation of a fly. Then I do not see how he can get out of the sequence that the better the imitation the more likely it is to deceive, and if he is obliged to consult the fishes' tastes at all, the more sedulously he consults them the more likely he is to please them, and this is all that we Southerns do. This is a position which I do not think it is possible to upset. Nor do I see what can be said beyond it. If it be urged that colorology is easier, demands less study, consideration, or variety, that appears to me to be a lazy argument, applicable to every science, and cuts away one of the most interesting branches of the fisher's amusement. The trout in the north are more plentiful than they are in our streams in the south. The season for feeding is much shorter. The rivers for the most part do not so abound in food as ours, often flowing as they do over hard gravel and rocky beds and through barren moorland districts, and the fish have harder work to pick up a living, and are therefore possibly less inclined to be closely critical when they are feeding, and if the fly be somewhat near the colour and size they cannot afford to reject it. A Scotchman measures his takes by dozens, we by braces; and it is more difficult to take the brace upon one of our well-thrashed streams, than it is the dozen on the other side of the border, and consequently we are obliged to be more careful in our deceptions, and to watch nature more closely.

Our system is, however, little by little creeping north. On Tweed a considerable advance has been made of late years towards the studying of the fly that is "up," and the imitation thereof; and one hears now amongst the best anglers there, of blue and yellow duns, March browns, willow flies, and several other names for flies, many of which are perhaps local, but which nevertheless indicate the flies actually on the water. "What fly is up?" is becoming nearly as common a question as it is "down south;" and if angling progresses steadily in the way it is doing, many a stream where no study is now paid to what may be on the water will, in a few years, if fish are to be killed, call for a much closer attention to this peculiarity than is at present exercised. One thing I can certainly say, viz. that by following the system I advocate, of studying nature as closely as possible, I have never come upon a stream in the kingdom (and I have fished much the greater part of it, where the colorological practice prevails), on which, after a sufficient acquaintance to make me tolerably familiar with the water, I could not, with my southern book of imitations, kill trout quite as well and often better than many of the *habitués* of the water could with their piscatory heirlooms and relics. This, however, does not apply to all lakes. On many of these, whether it be owing to the depth of water or what not, fancy has a good deal to do with the trouts' notions, though on others I have found entomology exceedingly successful. Of course here and there one meets some old fellow who knows every stone and eddy, and whose local knowledge must give him a great advantage; but, as a rule, I have always found a close imitation of the natural fly to do better than all the blacks, or browns, or reds, or blues, or hare-lugs, and all the colours of the rainbow, which the Celtic practitioner regards as sacred traditions. I never wanted yet to ask what fly was taking, if there were any fly at all on, knowing at a glance, from experience, pretty well what the fly was; for a blue dun, or a yellow dun, or red spinner, or a March brown, are the same flies, and should be dressed in the same way on the north of Tweed as on the south.

Although there are many kinds of flies which do kill, the chief ones which the angler must rely upon are those which are best known to the trout, and these are the flies born of the water, or which from their habits and location are most likely to be blown on to it. Of these, though there are a considerable number in the aggregate, yet the best of them, and those which are most abundant, are found on every stream, and are, as I have said, the same on all of them, and they are not so numerous but that any angler may with a little trouble become tolerably well acquainted with them. Of course there are partial and local exceptions—flies which are found in some waters and not in others—but even these he will become acquainted with in time. Do not listen therefore, dearly beloved pupil, to delusive talk of hares' ears and yellow, or hare's ear and purple, or green, or what not, or bloas of all sorts of shades, or fancy flies of endless hue. Some of these certainly kill, but it is rather a fluke if they do, while the odds are that they don't. I will give a list of the best of them, firstly, because, as I said, they do kill sometimes, and, secondly, because my book would certainly be held incomplete by many anglers without it; but always first try the fly that is on, or has been on, or which you think ought to be on, before you venture upon these fancies, and be sure that, wherever you go, you will find your March browns, stone flies and drakes, or your willow flies, alders, sand flies and cinnamons, your duns and spinners, etc., feeding the trout more or less. These are your ground-tackle, your holdfast, and if you once master enough of a fly-fisher's entomology to get a fair knowledge of the ordinary succession of flies which usually throng the water in the generality of rivers, you need not venture upon the uncertain realms of fancy at all—you may go anywhere, east, west, north or south, and never trouble a professional to tell you what is on his water, or what will kill best, for you will know what flies should be in season, and if you have any doubt, a glance will tell you.

The following list is partly the result of my own experience, and partly that of others. The flies fed on by trout have been the same from all ages, unless we pin our faith on *The Vestiges of Creation*, and therefore one has nothing to do but to take them from those who have gone before, selecting the best favoured by the fish, and leaving the worst, and to make such suggestions on dressing them, etc., as experience may dictate.

The principal flies which, as I have said, the angler relies upon, are those born of the water. The most useful of these are divided into two great orders, viz. the Neuroptera, or nerve-winged (from νεῦρον, a nerve, and πτερόν, a wing—these are the flies which have smooth wings, veined to and fro like the drakes, the stone and the alder flies), and the Trichoptera, or hairy-winged (from θρίξ, gen. τριχός, hair, and πτερόν, a wing).* Among these are our sand flies, cinnamons, mushroom flies, silver horns, etc. There is an enormous variety of these flies, something like two hundred British species having been discovered. The wings are soft, and somewhat in appearance like those of moths. They are not upright, like those of the drakes and duns, nor flat like those of the stone and willow flies, but come up to an angle, like the roof of a house somewhat; as it is termed, they are deflected. These two orders are subdivided. Among the Neuroptera are the Ephemeridæ, as the May flies, duns, and spinners; the Perlidæ, as the stone and willow flies; and the Sialidæ, of which we have but one sample, though that is a host in itself, viz. the alder fly. The Trichoptera, used for the most part, include only the family of Phryganidæ, if we except the silver horns.

The other orders in most use by the fly-fisher are, the Coleoptera, or sheath-winged (from κολεός, a sheath), insects having two pairs of wings, the upper of which are hard and horny, and are called elytra, and form the sheath for the under ones, when at rest, as the coch y bondu or Marlow buzz, the fern fly, the peacock, and others; and the Diptera, or two-winged (from δύο, two), as the cow-dung, hawthorn, black gnat, gravel bed, etc. The majority of the insects used in the two last orders, however, are land insects.

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* In modern classification the *Trichaptera* are placed as a family of the order *Neuroptera*.—Ed.

The two families upon which the main hopes of the angler rest, are the Ephemeridæ and the Phryganidæ, since some of the species of one or the other, or both of these families, are sure to be on the water if any fly at all is. As much confusion prevails amongst anglers as to their history, it may not be out of place here to devote a few lines to it. An error which still largely prevails amongst fishermen is, that the May flies or drakes come from the caddis, or case grubs, found in abundance in many waters at the bottom; and according to the plenty or scarcity of these, so they estimate the plenty or scarcity of the May fly, in the season. This is a great mistake, as the caddis has nothing whatever to do with the Ephemeridæ; it is the home of the Phryganidæ exclusively, and their plenty will determine the abundance of sand, grannom, sedge, cinnamon, and other flies of that class.

To trace the Ephemeridæ through their various transformations, we will commence with the egg, which is dropped on the water by the imago, or perfect fly, and which finds its way to the bottom, where it awaits the period of hatching. When hatched, it becomes a very active predaceous larva (the word larva signifying a mask,* as in this form it is the mask of the perfect insect), with six legs, and extremely strong hook-shaped mandibles, the tail having three whisks, which are the rudiments of the tail of the imago. Along the sides of the larva is a series of small filamentary appendages, serving as fins, and by the aid of which the creature is supposed to breathe under water; these are somewhat akin to the filaments or fringes of which the gills of fishes are composed, and extract from the water in a similar manner the oxygen necessary for the larva's existence. Another error of anglers is thus disposed of, viz. that owing to spring floods, the larvæ of the May fly have been drowned when there is a bad fly year. The process of drowning an insect which lives in the water must be an uncommon one, to say the least of it. These larvæ make themselves holes in the bed or banks of the river, or reside under stones, etc., so as to be safe from the attacks of the many animals which prey on them. After a time, the larva changes into a pupa (the word pupa signifying a puppet, or doll, from the swathed and swaddled appearance of the grub, with its wings, etc., bandaged about as it were); the change in form is slight, but an important change has, nevertheless, taken place. Hitherto the creature has possessed no sign of wings; changing into the pupa state, it throws off its skin, and another one is developed, and on the shoulders are seen two excrescences, which are the rudiments of the future wings. The pupa is also larger than the larva. The time which the larva and pupa dwell under water varies in the different species from one to three years, it is supposed. At length, however, the insect approaches to the change into the fly state, when it rises to the surface, or creeps to the bank, and there, splitting off another case, at once emerges a fly. But even now it is not a perfect insect, and is incapable of procreating its species; its colours are dim and dull, its motions heavy, it dwells much on the surface of the water, and is an easy and welcome prey to the eager fish. In this form it is said to be *semi-completa*, or only a half complete insect, and is termed the pseudimago, or false image: in the May fly it is the green drake, and in the smaller species is the dun of the angler. After a short time, however, the fly throws off another complete casing, and emerges the perfect insect, larger, brighter in colour, with tail greatly elongated, stronger and far more active—a perfect insect, the imago or image. The green drake has now become the grey drake; the last offices of the insect's life are performed, it consummates its existence, drops its eggs upon the water, to the number of many hundreds, and dies.

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* While it has been ascertained that the larvæ of some of the Ephemeridæ feed upon small forms of animal life, all authorities, from Swammerdum and Pictet down to our own time, seem agreed that the larva of the British May fly (*Ephemera danica*) so far from being actively predaceous, subsists entirely by swallowing mud, and derives nutriment from such particles of organic matter, animal or vegetable, as it may contain.—Ed.

The Phryganidæ go through much the same process, with the notable exception that they spring from the pupa state into the perfect fly or imago at once, not having to pass through the pseudimago phase of existence. When the eggs of the Phryganidæ are hatched, they take the form of a little soft grub, resembling a maggot in appearance, with a hard horny head, and with six feet upon the future thorax. This is the larva form, and as the skin is very tender and soft, and susceptible of injury, it proceeds, by means of a kind of gluten it possesses, to form for itself a dwelling, and attaches itself to small fragments of stick, sand, stone, and shells, until it has constructed a small, rough, hard tubular case, within which it can shroud itself completely. One end of the case is left entirely open, and from this the animal at times, when it desires to shift its position, protrudes its head and feet, and travels along, drawing the case after it ; the other end is in many species partially closed, leaving only a round air-hole, which fulfils a curious purpose in insect economy. It is in the power of the larva to raise itself to the surface of the water by secreting within the tail end of the case a small portion of air sufficient to buoy up the weight of itself and its habitation, and by means of this it may often be seen hanging, as it were, from the surface of the water, apparently basking with its tail upwards ; but at the least alarm or the slightest touch the air-bubble is expelled through the round hole alluded to, and the creature drops at once to the bottom. When it is about to change into the pupa form, the larva closes up the tube, and thus in a sort of cocoon becomes a pupa, the wing cases, etc., being developed, as in the Ephemeridæ, but rather more perfectly. When about to change into the imago, some of the species tear open the closed-up entrance and crawl to the bank of the river, and there abandon their case, and become the imago. Some of the smaller species, however, by the power above mentioned, rise to the surface, and take wing from their cases, using them as a sort of raft. These cases are beautifully smooth and polished on the inside, and well adapted to the creature's habits. The rest of its existence is similar to that already described for the Ephemeridæ, save that it is somewhat more prolonged.

As I am not writing a work upon entomology, it is not worth while to occupy further space by describing the history of the other various orders. It will suffice to say, that they all more or less go through somewhat similar transformations—egg, larva, pupa, imago being the progress of their existence, which is carried out either in the earth, or in animal or vegetable matters, in the droppings of cattle or the bark of trees. Nor should I have ventured to dip even thus far into the science of entomology, save to dispel errors of belief and judgment, which often produce in practice results unfavourable to the angler's interests. I trust, however, that these explanations may be found so far interesting to the angler as to call for no further apology for their introduction.

March is quite early enough to begin fly-fishing; * for though they do begin in Devonshire in February, yet, as the ghost of Giles Scroggins said to Molly, when she objected to go with him because she was not dead, "That's no rule." One of the first flies found abroad, particularly in the midland counties' streams, is

The February Red.—For a representation of the natural fly, see Plate VIII, Fig. 12, page 134. I have the dressing of this fly from Mr. Ackers, the president of the Leintwardine Club, as it is much in favour in that part of the country. It belongs to the Perlidæ, and is a member of the same family as the great stone fly, the smaller willow fly, and the still smaller needle brown. Their wings, of which they have two sets, are hard, horny, and shining, and are folded flat on the back in a very small space; and, though comparatively small-looking insects when at rest, when on the wing their appearance is greatly increased by the double allowance of wings. Body, two turns of dirty claret—red mohair at the tail, and medium brown mohair, with a strand or two of hare's ear and claret thrown in for the rest of the body.† Hackle, dark grizzled blue dun (cock's); wing, a slip from the back of the peahen; hook, No. 9 or 10, or larger for rough weather.

The Blue Dun (see Plate VIII, Fig. 4, p. 134).—This is perhaps one of the best known and most generally used flies in the kingdom. It is known equally as the early dark dun, the hare's ear, and the cock-tail. In Lancashire, Cumberland, and that district, it is the blue and olive bloa; in Yorkshire, the blue drake; in Devonshire, the hare's pluck, the hare's fleck, and the blue upright; in fact, its names are as endless as those of the salmon fry, and it is a common favourite upon every river from Caithness to Cornwall. It varies slightly in colour according to the temperature and season. If the day be cold and bleak, it has a darker tinge than in warmer and more genial weather. Grizzled fibres pulled from the hare's ear are favourite materials for the body, and these are warped in sometimes with yellow silk and sometimes with olive silk, so that the colour may be seen which gives the variety required. This makes rather a rougher body than I like; I prefer silk as more natural, as the body of the fly is unquestionably smooth and not hairy. So much, however, do the duns, blue and yellow, vary in shade, that with perhaps a dozen different shades in my book, I have at times been unable satisfactorily to hit the exact hue ; and as colour is more to the fish than anything else, I cannot recommend too strongly to the angler the desirability of having a good and complete selection of duns of various shades. Such a selection I find invaluable, and I always endeavour to keep the stock up to working order, as one or the other is nearly always in the water. To show how confusion may arise by giving names to the various shades of this fly, instead of simply treating them as varied shades of the same fly, I may cite, for example, that "Ephemera," in his March flies, reproduces this fly under four different names—the early dark dun, the olive fly, the dark hare's ear, and the hare's ear and yellow ; a little variety in the shade is all the real difference that exists between them.

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* I should like to read May in this sentence instead of March. There are very few waters indeed where large trout are in decent condition before May. Small fish pick up condition more quickly, but 1st May is quite early enough for the Hampshire trout streams.—Ed.

† On the Tweed it is called May fly.—Ed.

For the *Early Blue Dun*, or olive dun, hare's ear body wound on with olive silk ; two turns of a medium blue dun hackle, just dipped in onion dye* to give it a faint olive tinge. Some use no hackle, but pick out the hare's ear at the breast for legs. A darkish bit of the feather from the starling's wing, stained in the same manner, and dressed rather upright, for a wing, with a couple of fibres of the hackle for the tail (not too long), is said to give a reasonably good imitation of the fly. As I have said, I think the body too rough, and I prefer to dress it with an olive-coloured silk body, with a fine thread of yellow silk for ribbing. This may be hit off of the right hue by well waxing a bit of light yellow sewing silk with cobbler's wax, and then untwisting it, so that a portion of the interior or unwaxed part may come to light. By winding this on with some care, a very good alternation of olive and pale yellow rings may be made, and no better blue dun body can well be conceived. By less waxing and more display of the unwaxed silk, the shade may be easily lightened. For years I used no other, and I killed with it all over the kingdom. In all these flies avoid over hackling them ; it is a grave fault. Hooks, Nos. 9 and 10, or smaller if for very fine water. After a short existence, this fly changes into

The Red Spinner (see Plate VIII, Fig. 5, p. 134), or red-tailed spinner of Jackson, and orange drake of Theakstone. This is the imago of which the blue dun is the pseudimago, and after its transformation it comes forth a brilliant and much more beautiful insect. Its wings, body, and tail are longer, more slender, and more lustrous, its colour being entirely changed; the body being of brown-red, the legs red, and the wings of a bright steely hue. It is a very lively and strong flying insect, and though it occasionally comes on the water in the day-time, yet it more often comes out in the cool of the evening, when it may be seen dancing up and down, rising and falling again in a very peculiar and striking manner, in thousands. A slight shower of rain then will fill your creel rapidly. As the blue and yellow duns vary in hue, so do the spinners from a dark burnt sienna colour (almost red) to a very light brown, the wings ranging also from a steel hue, to an almost transparent white, like glass. The spinners are only second in the estimation of the trout to the duns, and a good stock and variety of them should always be kept by the angler. The usually so-called red spinner has various costumes assigned to it; few of them are alike, probably because there are many spinners varying but slightly. "Ephemera" gives one dressing of the red spinner; Ronalds, another; Wade, in *Halcyon*, three others; Jackson, another; and Theakstone, another, and hardly any of them are alike. Body, dark red-brown silk, ringed with fine gold thread; legs, a red hackle; tail, three wisps of the same; wing, a dark shiny brown feather, the more brilliant and transparent the better. This is nearer to "Ephemera's" directions than any others. The body and legs are all pretty plain sailing, but the great difficulty in the fly rests in the wings. There are various feathers used for the wing of this fly, none of which, to my mind, at all accurately represent it, for the wings are so brilliant, sparkling, and transparent, that a mere mass of dull feathers would seem a hopeless imitation indeed; the darker feather from a starling's, or rather from a hen blackbird's, wing is often used. The inside part of the brown tinged feather in a jay's wing, brown owl, drake, and many others are employed; but the best imitation in feathers, to my mind, is conveyed by the dark shining tips of a blue cock's hackle—those which are grizzled or freckled with a golden tinge at the point, hitting off the resemblance almost exactly, the open fibrous nature of the hackle giving the glassy transparency so much required, and which cannot be conveyed by any other feather, the springiness and play of the cock's hackle being required here also. Hooks, Nos. 9 and 10. I always have my spinners dressed with the above wing and they answer admirably.

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* Made by steeping the peelings of onions in water.—F.F.

The March Brown, or cob-fly of Wales ; brown drake, Yorkshire (see Plate VIII, Fig. 3, p. 134).—This is another very celebrated fly, and when on, it is a great and deserved favourite. It comes on in March, and lasts, with its metamorphosis, the great red spinner, until May. It can be used at times throughout the season, but its advent is in March, when some waters positively swarm with it. It varies slightly in size, and the male and female differ a little in shade of colour, the female having a greenish tinge, and being of a somewhat lighter colour. It is a largish fly, and should be dressed usually on a No. 8 hook, though on fine waters it is dressed smaller. Body, of a dark brown fur, hare's ear or face, ribbed with tawny yellow silk (some use straw-colour) ; legs, hackle from a partridge's back ; tail, two strands of the same ; wings, the dark mottled and blurred feather from a cock pheasant's wing (some use partridge tail, or a mottled woodcock feather, or the speckled feather from a game hen's rump, but the pheasant's wing is the best imitation). For the female, the legs may be from the partridge breast, the tail of the same, and a few shreds of any olive fur may be introduced amongst the hare's ear, and the wing may be a shade lighter than that used for the male. If the fly be on strongly, the angler will find his account in having both male and female on his cast. This is also an indispensable fly to the angler. As I have said, this fly changes into the great red spinner. Some people have a high opinion of the great red spinner. I have never done a great deal of business with it, though it is, no doubt, a good evening fly throughout the season, as, indeed, is any other largish brown fly. It is a strong active fly, and not easily driven on the water against its will, and the trout, therefore, have less opportunity of cultivating its acquaintance than they have of its original, the March brown. I do not consider it an indispensable fly, but as some do fancy it, it should be dressed of the same size as the March brown, or a size larger, with a red squirrel's fur body, ribbed with gold twist ; amber-red cock's hackle for legs ; two long strands of the same for the tail ; wing, the bright glassy golden feather from the wing of a thrush. It is a very elegant fly, if the fishes be discriminators of beauty.

The Cow-dung or *Lion Fly.*—This is one of the most useful of the land flies, particularly on windy days, such as the angler may expect in March and April. Wherever there be meads and cows, there the angler may be sure, particularly in the spring, to find the cow-dung fly, and a large number may always be observed, thanks to the wind's agency, upon the water, where, maugre their savoury origin, they afford much delectation to the hungry trout. Hook, No. 8 or 9; body, full and fat, of tawny orange crewel, with a few sprigs of squirrel's fur worked into the body, as it is a hairy fly; legs, yellowish-red hackle, say, from Cochin China cock—some use a darker red; wings, dressed close and flat, of the landrail, one of the lighter shade being chosen. The angler need not cast this fly like a zephyr. Naturally, when blown into the water, it flops in like a beetle, but it immediately recovers its presence of mind, and sits on the water, though somewhat stupidly in appearance, quite as if it was used to it; its hairiness prevents it from being drowned easily. It is not indispensable, but sometimes it is a useful fly.

The Needle Brown.—This little fly, which, as I have already said, belongs to the Perlidæ, is only partially treated of by angling writers. It is the smallest of the willow flies. Wade mentions it in *Halcyon* as the Spanish needle, but without comment. Theakstone, in his capital little work on the streams about Ripon, gives a full account of it. Jackson mentions it as the little brown; but Ronalds, "Ephemera," and Blaine say nought about it, which, considering how widely the fly is dispersed, is somewhat strange; possibly the difficulty of imitating it successfully has something to do with it: as an old friend of mine used to say of it, who was a great frequenter of Tweed, where it abounds, "A nasty little nuisance! you can neither do with it nor without it." It is a great favourite, however, with the trout; and as it makes its appearance early, and is to be found more or less throughout the season, it cannot be other than a useful fly. On fine sunny days the angler may often notice it on the stones, piles, posts, etc., by the river side—a little insect of some half an inch or more in length, resembling in appearance a thin fragment of stick or straw, of a steely brown colour (hence the name it is sometimes known by—the Spanish needle); sometimes it is perfectly still and quiet, but when disturbed it shows great activity, running over the stones and hiding itself in cracks. On fine warm days, and later in the season, it is often very abundant. On catching and examining the insect, the angler will observe that the wings, which are closely folded over the body, overlap at the tail, are of a fine shining brown, similar in colour and texture to the wings of the well-known alder fly. These, however, are only the upper wings; under them, and joining the body about a third of its length down, is another pair of wings. The extension of these two pair of wings when the insect is in the act of flight gives this species, as I have said, rather a considerable appearance; but the moment it perches, its pretentious appearance vanishes and it becomes a fine shred again. There are a good many varieties of this fly, and they vary in shade and size as the season advances. The body is best imitated with a fine shred from the yellowish quill from a thrush's wing; for legs a grizzled blue dun cock's hackle; the under wings starling's feather (not too much of it), and above them two fine slips of hen blackbird's wing. I consider this a useful fly, if well and carefully dressed, throughout the season, and though it can hardly be considered an indispensable one, I have seen the trout feeding upon it almost to the exclusion of every other fly. Owing to the peculiar arrangement of the wings, it is very difficult to dress, however, and possibly if dressed buzz or hackle-wise with about one-half of the hackle fibres on the under or breast side snipped off (as indeed all buzz dressed flies, except the actual palmers, should be served), it would be found to kill better. Hooks, Nos. 11 and 12.

The Red and Black Hackles, or *Palmers* as they are termed, are especial favourites and quite a *pièce de resistance* with many anglers, more particularly the red one. I rarely use them, save for dace and chub, but many anglers as rarely fish without one or the other of them. As respects the palmer theory, it appears to me to invade the realms of fancy, and Mr. Ronalds' beautiful drawings of the caterpillars of the *Arctia caja*, or *Lasiocampa rubi* moths, etc., are ingenious, but, I fear, misapplied. The only palmer at all answering to the received notion is the caterpillar of the tiger-moth, *Arctia caja*, an insect of an inch and a half in length and almost as thick as a pencil. I do not deny that, for chub, palmers are dressed of that size nearly, but how often in the course of a season does the angler come across a tiger-moth or his caterpillar either? Unless he goes out to hunt for them he may not see a dozen. But suppose he sees double or treble that number—in which case he would write to the *Field*, probably to note the great and unusual abundance of tiger-moths in his locality—how many of them, at a fair calculation, will oblige the trout by seeking out the river side (for the water does not produce them), and having laboriously ascended one of the trees on the bank, and then with careful judgment and nice discrimination having selected the boughs most fitted for the purpose as overhanging the water, relinquish their hold (a pretty firm one, by the way) for the sole purpose of dropping into the water that they may be gobbled up by the trout below. This is the only way they can get into the water, for a heavy insect like this is not blown about like a fly. I do not mean to say that a variety of caterpillars, as well as beetles and other insects, do not drop from the trees into the water. There are many of them which particularly affect such places and the kind of trees which grow there, but I do not think the *Arctia caja* caterpillar is one of them, gardens being its favourite locality, so much so that the moth is called " the garden tiger." The percentage of these palmers, therefore, which find their way into the rivers thus must necessarily be very small—so small, indeed, as to offer very few opportunities to the trout of ascertaining their flavour ; and it is a very great question if more than one trout in a hundred ever has in his lifetime an opportunity of becoming acquainted with it. I can only say that in all my experience, and that is not short or little, I never remember but once or twice to have seen this caterpillar drifting on the water, and then—why then I threw it there myself to experimentalise.

As regards the taste of a chub for them, all that can be said is, that there is no small animal or large insect of any kind, or imitation thereof, which you can throw to him which he will not seize and devour with avidity ; and I equally believe that there is nothing that can be dressed with fur and feathers in the shape of insect or fly which some trout or other will not be rash enough to dash at, at times. What is more common than for a trout to lay hold of a salmon fly half as big as himself ? What does he mistake that for ? For the tiger-moth itself possibly, upon which he *is* so in the habit of feeding. Granting even the palmer theory, can the trout mistake the small insect dressed with some three turns of a red hackle and half a strand of herl for a huge hairy caterpillar of more than a dozen times its size ? Is this reasonable, or is it not simple nonsense ? Then, it is often called the coch y bondu, when dressed with a hackle with a black centre. Now, if this really be meant for an imitation of the coch y bondu, it is a very bad one. The coch y bondu, which is identical with the bracken clock, the Marlow buzz, the shorn fly, the fern webb, etc. etc., is not a fly or palmer but a winged beetle, like unto a very small cockchafer, and which makes its appearance in *some* localities (for it is very local and abounding sometimes on one or two miles of a river and absent from the next one or two) in the balmy airs of June. Yet we use this fly even in February, and it takes. We use it, moreover, *as the coch y bondu* on rivers where the natural insect is never seen, and still it takes well at times. It is more than probable that the fish mistake it either for a water spider or the larva of some beetle or fly which it may possibly resemble. There are many spiders, as I have already pointed out, which lead an aquatic existence, and I am very much of Mr. Stewart's opinion that the angler does not sufficiently take these useful aids to his art under his consideration. But although I can speak tolerably positively as to what it is not mistaken for, I do not pretend to speak nearly so positively as to what it is mistaken for. Spider, beetle, or larva, it is a very useful insect to the angler, and though, as I have said, I use it more for dace and chub than trout, many anglers hold a different opinion of it, and dressed with a full body of peacock herl on a No. 8, 9, or 10 hook, and three or four turns of a fine blood-red cock's hackle, it will do some execution from March till October.* If the angler likes the coch y bondu theory he can dress it with a hackle with a black centre to it, when it will kill equally well, sometimes better. A further description of the coch y bondu will be found subsequently.

The black hackle is tied in the same way and of the same size with a black cock's hackle and peacock's herl mixed with black ostrich, but it is a less useful fly; indeed, I seldom employ it at all on our southern rivers.

There are other flies recommended for March by various writers which may be adopted if the angler thinks fit. Mr. Ronalds recommends the peacock fly, which is rather a small-winged beetle than a fly. It is somewhat local in its character but is pretty plentiful where it is found. Body, bronze peacock's herl dressed with mulberry silk; wing, the darkest part of a starling's wing; legs, a hackle stained dark purple, appearing black, but when held up to the light having a dark tortoise-shell hue: hook, No. 11 or 12. The angler will usually find, however, that for March he need not go far beyond one or two shades of the blue dun, the March brown, the red spinner, the cow-dung, and the coch y bondu. The rest he may have, these he must.

April.—For this month the best flies are those which I have named for the last one, all of which may still be depended on. But there are many other excellent flies which make their appearance this month. Chief amongst them is

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* For chub the palmers are dressed upon No. 6 and 7 hooks and often have as many as two hackles laid on to make them very bushy.—F. F.

The Yellow Dun, yellow-legged bloa of Jackson, hare's ear and yellow, etc. (see Plate VIII, Fig. 6, p. 134).—I am almost inclined to think that the yellow dun is but a modification or sort of second crop of the blue dun; at any rate it bears a very close relationship to it. It seems to prefer warmer weather than the blue dun, and comes on more during the middle of the day than at morning or evening. It should be dressed of the same size as the blue dun. The body is of an olive-yellow. Take a shred of yellow silk, wax it lightly with a bit of the light wax (see white wax receipt), and then unravel it, and wind it on the hook for the body. The centre of the silk which has not been touched by the wax will, as I have shown in the blue dun, show a brighter coil here and there, which will give the brighter yellow rings or joints of the body. Contrive, if possible, when thus laying it on, to make the yellowest portions show on the belly, and the darker or more olive hue caused by the wax more visible upon the back, as the back of the fly is of a darker tinge than the belly. If this be neatly and properly done, it gives a capital imitation of the body. Some writers recommend mohair and crewels, but this cannot be a good imitation, because the body is smooth and shiny, and not in the least rough, added to which, crewels and such materials should never be used for these flies if they can be avoided, as they suck up a good deal of water, and make the fly lumpy and heavy. The legs should be made of a delicate honey dun hen's hackle. This hackle has a dull, pale, smoky bluish centre and golden tips, which show more plainly when held up to the light. It is rather a scarce feather to obtain, and the owners of hens which produce it in perfection are rather choice over them, and therefore if the angler cannot get it, he may use the hackle of a light buff Cochin China hen, which practically does almost as well. To vary the shade, if the body be at all dark, use a pale blue dun hackle. The wing should be taken from the wing of a young starling, being a lighter colour and having a finer texture than that of an old one. The tail is short and limp, and is best imitated by leaving about half an inch of a couple of the untwisted strands of the silk of which the body is composed, or the angler may use two strands of the buff Cochin hackle. Hooks No. 9 and 10 or smaller. This fly, which is also indispensable to the angler, after a few days changes its coat and becomes

The Brown Spinner.—This is another capital fly. It is very similar to the red spinner, and may be dressed very like it, save that the body should be made of not so red but of lighter and browner silk, ribbed with fine gold wire. The hackle should be of a lighter red, not such a blood-red as the red spinner, and the wing should also be of a shade or two lighter hue. It will be found more plentiful towards the afternoon and evening. The angler will find his account in using the red spinner when the blue dun has been on in the day, and the brown one when the yellow dun has prevailed. There is also

A Larger Yellow Dun.—I call it a yellow dun because it very much resembles the fly I have mentioned above, and not because it is the same fly, for I doubt if it belongs to the same family. In some places it is called the large blue. It would more appropriately be termed the large yellow. It should be dressed of one or perhaps two sizes larger than the yellow dun, and with a more prevalent olive tinge; in other respects, the dressing given above may be tolerably closely observed. Mr. Ronalds, in speaking of this fly, does not appear to estimate it very highly, but it is a capital fly nevertheless, and may be used throughout the season with great advantage, as I have seen it favourably noticed upon the water even in the month of September.

The next best fly to my mind—and it is a great favourite of mine when it comes on—is the

Little Iron-blue Dun (see Plate VIII, Fig. 7, p. 134).—The iron-blue dun of Ronalds; the iron-blue drake of Theakstone; little iron-blue, etc. etc., of Wade (who has more than a dozen different dressings and names for this fly); little dark bloa of Jackson, little dark dun, etc. etc. "Ephemera" does not mention this fly at all, unless a whirling dun, given in April, is meant for it. Jackson does not give this fly till June, though all other authors introduce it in April. Nevertheless, he does give its transformation or imago in May. It comes on whenever there is a glint of sunshine on the cold and windy days towards the end of April, and the trout appear very averse to let any of them escape. The angler may be wondering at the dullness of the fish. All perhaps has been quiet; he has hardly taken a fish or seen a rise for half an hour. Suddenly he hears a "plop," then another. He looks about and discovers an iron-blue or two on the stream. They are the advanced guard. Anon the main army comes on, and down the water they sail in scores, sitting lightly and saucily on the surface, the neatest, cleanest, and most bloodthirsty-looking little fellows. On they come, whirling about on the eddying current, now head upstream and now down. Plop, plop, plop, the trout are rising in all directions ; the fun grows fast and furious. Well betide the angler then if he has a stock of them well and neatly tied upon the finest weed-coloured gut, for in the next half-hour many a fin shall flap and tail shall wag beneath his bending rod, which never shall wag more. Useless then your blue and yellow duns ; unless all your March browns and spinners—the trout will not look at them. Essay a cast of them over yonder fine fellow that has risen a score of times under the bank there, while you have been changing flies in vain (not having our little barb friend in your store). There, you cover him with the bob fly, and up he comes. You need not strike, for no answering twitch follows the sudden rise. He merely took an iron-blue within an inch of your bob. And there, as I live, ere the stretcher is well over him, he has taken another ! How they are rising to be sure ! and how desperately provoking it is that not one of them all will look at you. Suddenly, as if by magic, all is still. Every trout has left off rising. Who would believe, to look at the bosom of that placid stream now undimpled by a rise or a ripple, that but a bare half-minute since it was all in a break and turmoil with the splash and rising of ravenous monsters ? To look at the stream now no one would think there is a trout in it. You know better though ; and now if you have the skill and the patience, sit down in some sheltered nook, pull out your fly book, choose your finest hooks and gut (hook, No. 11 or 12), and set to work. Have you an old fly with a mole's fur body, or any silk for that colour, or even a shade lighter, as the fly varies from light lead colour to mole's fur ? Good ! on with it ; not too fast nor too thick, however. The shank of your hook will be almost sufficient for the tail end of the body, and will be almost of the right colour. Now, two turns of a dark slate-blue dun hackle, and now, almost upright, a wing composed of very fine dark smoky blue, or lead-coloured feather. Wade recommends the small feather in the cormorant's wing or the tomtit's tail ; Ronalds, cormorant, tomtit wing, or breast of water-hen ; Theakstone, breast of water-hen ; and Jackson, wing of water-hen ; so the tyer can take his choice. The fact is, the wing varies in darkness or lightness, as does both the body and hackle. Tail, did you say ? True, we had forgotten the tail, but it is not of much consequence, and I as often use it without as with, as the tail in the living insect is stuck upwards from the water, and, I am inclined to think, is unnoticed by the trout. However, as it is well to have your fly perfect if you wish it, tie in at the end of the whipping a couple of strands of a lighter hackle than the one you use. The natural insect has rather a prominent head, and eyes of a bright brown colour, and if you like to take half a turn of reddish squirrel fur at the extreme shoulder it will improve the fly. The iron-blue comes out on bleak days early in the season, when there is a glint of sunshine; but there is another little dark dun which much resembles the iron-blue, but is not so dark, being a shade or two lighter throughout, and the body should be lightly ribbed with fine straw-coloured silk. This fly, often taken for the iron-blue, comes on several times later in the season. It is quite possible that it may be a reproduction of the iron-blue, as the iron-blues themselves vary in depth of colour slightly, being lighter on one river than another. It is a valuable lure, and the angler should have two or three shades of it, for I have often been puzzled, though having different shades, in hitting the exact hue, and colour is, as I have before said, a great point with the trout.

And now look sharp, for half an hour has passed while you have been rummaging out your materials and tying your fly; and see, a fresh detachment of the iron-blues are sailing down the water, and the surface of the water, quiet enough but a few minutes since, is again alive with fish; and, as I live, there is your fat friend, who so contemptuously left your cast unnoticed a while agone, as busy as ever. Now for it—deftly, deftly! Well cast and lightly. Ha! again he rises, and this time you are revenged for his previous contempt, for you have him fast under "a severe course of steel" that shall speedily tame his rampant energy. So: safe at last! A beauty, and two honest pounds in weight, as I am a living angler and a sinner. Bravo! he will grace your basket right worthily; but lose no time in looking at him, you will have time for that anon, when the fish have ceased rising again. Always make hay as fast as you can while the sun shines and the iron-blues are coming, swirling thick and fast, and luck be with you, brother angler. Three cheers for your iron-blue! may it be the True Blue! This is also an indispensable servant of the angler's.

After a few days the iron-blue casts his coat, and you may find yours, perhaps, on some warm evening, covered with the small flecks of their whitish exuviæ,* and swarms of a beautiful little insect are careering round you. This is the delicate little

Jenny Spinner or *Spinning Jenny.*—Curiously enough, while Jackson does not give the iron-blue, he gives its imago, under the name of the little white spinner, and he places it early in May. By Theakstone it is called the pearl-drake. "Ephemera" does not mention it. Wade calls it the evening bloa. It is not at all an easy insect to imitate, so transparent are its colours and so slender its proportions. It is almost as great a favourite with the trout, however, as in its earlier form. Imprimis, the tail is to be made of two strands of a light blue dun hackle. The body is peculiar: at the head and tail it is of a bright brown colour; the middle part, however, is of a limpid watery white. This is generally very badly imitated by a few turns of dead white floss silk, which is about as like it as a drumhead is to a window-pane. A clear horsehair or a shred of fine gut wound round, may bear some resemblance to it. But the head and tail parts must be of bright orange-brown silk: about two turns of finest sewing silk, just enough to show clearly. The wings—ah! the wings! What shall we do to imitate their clear, delicate, watery transparency? The tips of two very pale light blue hackles might perhaps come near it. The usual way, however, is—as both Theakstone and Mr. Ronalds recommend—to dress the fly hackle fashion, or buzz, as it is termed, with the lightest, silveriest dun hackle to be got. If this fly could be well imitated (which it cannot), it would be a valuable one, but hitherto our imitations are but sorry affairs, and the fish appear to know it too, for although rising greedily at the natural fly, they do not greatly favour the imitation, even at the best, as they will do that of flies more easily imitated.

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* This more particularly occurs with the later broods of the iron-blue, which come on in June and early in July. Mr. Ronalds says upon this point: "A little dark dun with a brown head, not exactly similar to, but very much like the Iron Blue, is found in August, and then a spinner like the Jenny Spinner has an orange-coloured head, and the extremity of its body a lighter colour.

"There is also upon some waters a rather smaller ephemeral fly, similar in colour to the Jenny Spinner, whose metamorphosis does not change much, in tint, from the original. It is to be found in some seasons upon the Blythe, in Staffordshire; but upon lake Tal-y-llyn, in North Wales, this insect is so numerous, on warm evenings, as to form clouds, settling upon the dress of a person passing by the lake (or upon any other object), where, in five or ten minutes, it changes its coat, leaving the old one upon the dress, etc., which, if of a dark colour, becomes spangled with seemingly white spots. The tail increases to quite four times its original length when this change takes place."

I have seen this strikingly exemplified on the upper waters of the Test, where it is a great favourite with the fish. I have seen the river covered with rises when it is on, and have tried every fly I could think of in vain.

The Black Gnat.—This would be another very useful fly, but is also difficult to imitate from its exceeding diminutiveness. This fly has been called "the fisherman's curse," because when the fish are rising at it well, they are said to seldom take the imitation or any other fly. Still I have had a good deal of sport with it, *when but a few, or indeed none of them, have been on the water ;* I confess, however, when they are on very thickly, and the trout have been taking them freely or almost exclusively, that I have found my imitation though not altogether useless, yet greatly at a discount. Nevertheless, as I have said, it is occasionally a useful fly, when it dwells rather in the trout's memory than in his eye, and I know good anglers who are even very partial to the use of it, and who as often put it into their cast as any other fly. Choose your smallest hooks, take a black ostrich herl with the shortest fibre you can find—if not short enough, clip the body when tied up with a fine pair of scissors ; two turns of a very small black hackle for legs ; some eschew legs altogether—it certainly makes the fly less bulky. Wings, two very fine clear slips of a starling's feather, and dressed as low and flat as you can conveniently fix them. The fly is hardly abundant till the warmer suns of May bring it forth, but then it sometimes is very thickly on.

On a hook three sizes larger put the same dressing, the body being, of course, comparatively stouter, with wings and legs to match, or you may use a dark lead-blue dun hackle, and you have

The Hawthorn Fly (see Plate VIII, Fig. 18, p. 134).—A land fly, but at times by no means a useless ally of the angler's where hedges abound. Both the above flies are found more plentifully towards the end of the month.

The Gravel Bed or *Spider Fly* (see Plate VIII, Fig. 17, p. 134).—This is rather a local fly, and is not found upon every river, but when it is found it is a great favourite with the fish ; but it is capricious even in these places on dark, cold days, scarcely showing at all. But let an hour of warm sunshine break forth, and they come creeping from their holes to the great delight of the hungry trout. They abound on the Usk in South Wales, and on many of the Derbyshire streams they are found, but less plentifully. On sedgy rivers, flowing over a loamy or muddy bed they are not found. Hook No. 10 ; body fine, of dark slate or lead-coloured floss silk ; legs very long, almost as long as the hook, a black cock's hackle, but not too much of it—two turns are fully sufficient; wings, two fine slips from the woodcock's wing, dressed cold and flat.

All of the last three flies belong to the order of Diptera, the last two of the family of Tipulidæ or crane flies, of which the Daddy or Harry Longlegs is a prominent member. This family have but two wings, which are either expanded, as in the longlegs, or incumbent, that is, resting partly on the body, as in the two specimens depicted, and they are devoid of the two small supplementary wings called poisers, which may be seen in all the Ephemeridæ.

The Sand Fly (see Plate VIII, Fig. 14, p. 134).—This is a fly which has found many patrons. It is one of the numerous class of Phryganidæ, the natural history and characteristics of which I have already sufficiently described. The sand fly is a pretty taking looking fly; it is a general favourite, being a native of most streams. Some anglers never try it, and, though I often use it, I never find it very deadly. There are flies of the same class which I like better; and so many other flies are on at this time of the year, that one need not use it, unless a special fancy for it be indulged in. Dress it on a No. 10 hook of reddish fur from a hare's poll, mix well with buff fur, to give it the sandy tinge; legs, hackle from buff Cochin hen; wings, two scraps of starling, with two larger slips of landrail's reddish wing feather over the starling.

The Grannom or *Greentail.*—This is another member of the Phryganidæ. It has, like the last, a great name with some anglers, and on some streams it is very abundant, though its duration is rather limited. I must confess that I have not that faith in it which it may probably deserve. Size, same as the last fly, or one size smaller; body, hare's ear and water-rat fur mixed, the former prevailing; at the tail a turn of two of green floss silk to finish off and give the green tail, which is, in reality, a mass of eggs about to be deposited by the insect, and which have that tinge; legs, a grizzled blue dun hackle wing, from the rump of a brown speckled game hen. This fly lasts but for some ten days or a fortnight in the earlier part of April, though others of a similar species, with the green peculiarity at the tail, appear later in the season; I have seen them on thickly as late as July. Hook, No. 11.

The Sedge Fly.—This is a capital fly for all the southern and mid-county rivers throughout the summer, and kills better later on than now; on the Itchen, Test, Darent, and Kennet, it will kill well. It much resembles the sand fly, but is larger. The body is of light buff crewel; the hackle which runs from tail to head is a pale red—and a fine gold wire is usually run up over the hackle the reverse way; the wings are full, and are a starling under wing and landrail upper wing. Hooks, Nos. 8 and 9. It is occasionally dressed both smaller and larger however.

The Quill Gnat—spent gnat in Hampshire—makes its appearance late in April and runs on into May, and a very pretty, useful little insect it is. It may be seen sailing up and down in small flocks of a dozen or two, as the days grow milder and the spring grows general, steadied in its flight by its long tail, which is very long for the size of the insect. The hook should be No. 10 or 11; the body composed of a strip of the quill from a starling's feather neatly rolled on; legs, dark blue dun cock's hackle; wing, bright starling's wing. Pull the tail off and the fly will pass muster fairly for many other small flies, which it somewhat resembles, throughout the season.

The flies which I consider indispensable for April, in conjunction with those of March, are the yellow dun, brown spinner, iron-blue (two shades); the black and quill gnats; the sand fly or the sedge, the latter preferred; and, where they are abundant, the gravel bed and grannom cannot be omitted.

MAY.—*The Stone Fly* (see Plate VIII, Fig. 11, p. 134) is now out in considerable numbers where it is found. A few may be found towards the end of April, but early in May is the most favourite period for its full appearance. It is used naturally by daping or dibbing principally, but on windy days the artificial fly will often be found useful. This fly runs upon the water as easily and nimbly as on the land, and with its double wings up may often be seen half fluttering, half running, making its way at a rapid pace across the stream, seldom remaining quiescent as do so many other flies when sitting on the water's surface; essaying a flight, for which its heavy body is not very favourable, down it plumps on the water, and away it scuttles at a great pace to the nearest bank. The angler may therefore freely *work* his imitation, the liveliness he thus imparts to it being perfectly natural and just.

On some rivers it is called the May fly, but the green drake has a prior claim to the title, though possibly not a better one, as the green drake seldom appears in large numbers until June has commenced.* The female stone fly is much larger than the male, and is the one principally used by anglers. The hook should be No. 7, or No. 6 may even be used. Body, large and full of mixed hare's ear and water-rat with a few strands of dirty yellow mohair worked in, the tail part being exclusively of a somewhat brighter yellow ribbed distinctly with yellow silk; legs, a grizzled dark blue dun cock's hackle; tail, two strands of a brown mallard's feather; wing, hen pheasant's wing. The horns or feelers on the stone fly are very marked, and if it be thought desirable to have them, may be dressed upright of two rabbit's whiskers. The larva of this fly is used for fishing even more than the fly; it is called the crab or creeper. (See Creeper-fishing.)

The Oak Fly, called also the cannon fly, the down-hill or down-hooker, etc., from its habits of always sitting with its head downwards towards the ground. It is amusing to see with what certainty this fly will assume this particular posture; no matter in what way it perches on post or tree, it immediately wheels round until it has taken up its favourite position, in which it remains until disturbed.

This fly has a very high character from some anglers. "Ephemera" especially appears to have been very fond of it, and in windy weather it may prove an attractive lure; on fine still days, however, as it is not strictly a water fly, it is not found so plentifully upon the water. Being a largish fly it may be used advantageously for daping perhaps; I have often tried the imitation, but never did much with it, even when the natural fly was abundant on the grass and bushes by the river side. However, as it certainly has a high reputation, I suppose somehow and in some places it must have earned it, so I give it for its legendary worth, which shows the value of character, for from my own experience I should certainly omit it. Hook, No. 9 or 10; body, orange floss silk. The legs should be composed of a furnace hackle, i.e. a dark red hackle with a streak of black up the centre; this should be tied in at the tail and wound up to the shoulders, the hackle should then be snipped off short all up the body, leaving visible but spiral rings of the short black stubs. Enough of the hackle should be left on at the shoulders to form the legs. Wings, from the woodcock or hen pheasant's wing.

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* It received the name of May fly when under the old style (Julian) calendar, the 1st of June represented what is now, under the new style (Gregorian) calendar, the 18th of May. Allowance has to be made for this change in connection with all ancient weather saws, such as St. Swithin's day, "a green yule." etc.—Ed.

The Little Blue, Sky Blue, etc. (see Plate VIII, Fig. 9, p. 134).—This is a small dun which comes on this month; the fish are very fond of it, and it would be a very valuable fly to the angler if it were more possible to imitate it properly, which is a most difficult matter from its diminutiveness and extreme delicacy and transparency. The best way to dress it is on a No. 12 or 13 hook: for the body, pale buff mohair wound on very closely and neatly, a strand or two being left out for the legs; tail, two strands of a buff hackle; wings of the finest and brightest pale blue feather that can be got—the tern or sea-swallow is chiefly used, but I think fine blue hackle points would be preferable. Perhaps the best way is to dress it hackle fashion or buzz, and to take off nearly all the breast portion of the feather, leaving the upper part to do duty for wings, and the mohair for legs. A pale blue dotterel hackle will be found as good a feather for the purpose as can be used. I have been rather particular with this fly as it appears—or others very similar to it do—at intervals until the end of the season. When it comes on the trout will often take it for some time to the exclusion of many other flies which may be coming down the water simultaneously.

The Alder or *Orl Fly* (see Plate VIII, Fig. 15).—This is one of the best flies that comes upon the water; it varies considerably in size, and while some specimens may be found small enough to be dressed on a No. 9 hook, others may be met with large enough for a No. 6; 7 or 8 will be therefore the best medium sizes. Body, large and full, of a coppery peacock herl; legs, a dark grizzled blue dun or rusty black cock's hackle; wings, from the brown speckled feather from the rump of a brown game hen. The natural insect may be used in daping. From the middle of May till the end of June it will be found, particularly towards evening, a very useful fly, and when it first makes its appearance few flies are in more request, and dace and chub as well as trout take it very freely. It was with this fly I achieved the day's sport mentioned at p. 119, on the Kennet, using one of Ogden's patterns, which are the best I know of.

The Pale Evening Dun (see Plate VIII, Fig. 8, p. 134) is a rather light yellow dun, with a prevailing pale olive tinge given by a dip in onion dye. The spinner of this fly is of a very pale watery brown, legs light buff, and the wing white and transparent, and neat and rounded in shape. It comes on thickly on some streams at dusk. On the Teme, for example, I have seen it heavily on. As it comes on at dusk it is difficult to see this fly on the surface, so delicate and imperceptible is it, and yet, to the angler's annoyance, the trout will be rising heavily without his being able to discover at what. There are many night flies which rarely show at all by day, both amongst the Ephermeidæ and the Phryganidæ, and this is one of them. It is dressed thus: body, a dirty yellowish buff, ribbed with light lemon silk hackle, light blue dun-grey in tail. Tail, two whisks of the same; wings, light starling dipped in onion dye. Hook, No. 10 or 11.

The Little Yellow May Fly.—This miniature May fly which usually precedes the real May fly about a week or ten days, changes in a few days into a spinner of a pale-golden hue. It should be dressed on a No. 8 or 9 hook; the body of buff-coloured crewel, ribbed with bright yellow silk; tail, two strands of buff hackle; wings, similar to those of the green drake, or mallard's grey speckled feather stained pale olive-yellow; legs, a honey dun hackle. I have had good sport with this fly. It sometimes also makes a very useful fly for evening fishing for trout.

The needful flies for May are the alder and the little blue. The stone and the pale evening dun and the little yellow May fly are not general, but are useful where they prevail. The list is short because most of the flies for last month are the best for this.

JUNE.—*The May Fly* or *Green Drake*, called in Wales the Cadow (see Plate VIII. Fig. 1, p. 134).—This famous fly usually makes its first appearance in the last week in May, but is most abundant during the first fortnight of June. The swarms of May fly which are found in some rivers in favourable seasons are perfectly marvellous. Fish, birds, and other animals prey on them incessantly from their birth, and yet their numbers seem inexhaustible, and after a warm sunny day the quiet corners and still eddies may be seen smothered with them to such an excess that the angler might, if he chose, sweep them up by teaboards full at a time. It is most abundant just before its disappearance, and on the last two days what is called the "great rise" takes place, when they come out more thickly than ever, and after this but a few stragglers are seen; and the trout, for some days gorged and glutted with the unwonted excess, are torpid and disinclined to move. In this nature seems to assist them, as very few flies come on the water immediately after the May fly.

The green drake is, as I have said, an imperfect insect, the female becoming the grey drake and the male fly the black, or, as it is sometimes called, the death drake, this term being used from a foolish belief that it kills the female or grey drake. Many anglers hold it to be next to useless to attempt to use the artificial fly when the May fly is well on ; but this belief is very erroneous, and is more often used to excuse themselves for fishing with a blow-line or the live May fly than because it is really the fact. The green drake is no doubt a very difficult fly to imitate well, but I have seen many good baskets of trout made with the imitation, even in the finest and warmest weather. The best times to use the imitation are of course before the trout are thoroughly acquainted with it, and daily before the regular rise is fully established and the fish are settled down into feeding, and after the rise slackens towards evening, when the imitation of the grey drake may be used with some success ; and if the angler is industrious and up to his work, he may manage at these times to pick up several brace of good fish. In the middle of the day if it does not answer, the angler can try some other fly, when it will often happen that from caprice or for a change, the trout will often take an imitation of some other fly though they may refuse your imitation green drake. At such times I have often killed several brace of fine fish with the alder, sedge fly, or some of the duns or spinners which may chance to be on the water, and that, too, even when the May fly is on at the thickest of the rise.* The angler should bear in mind that while fish are rising there is always hope for him, and it by no means follows that because one fish refuses another will, or because half a dozen or even a score of fish refuse that all will, or because they are feeding on the May fly like an alderman on turtle, that they will refuse a sedge or alder any more than the said alderman will pepper or punch. Sitting on the bank and watching the fish rise is not the way to catch them, and perseverance even in the teeth of great apparent difficulties often rewards the angler with fish which nothing else would have given him.

When the May fly is only moderately on, the angler may often get capital sport with the artificial May fly. Of course if the day be blustrous and rough his chance is all the better, but even on a calm day if he can manage to keep his fly floating on the top he may take a good many fish. For this purpose it is of course imperatively necessary to fish with a dry fly, and between every cast the angler will have to make several false casts, or casts in which the fly does not touch the water, to shake the wet from the fly and to get it as dry as possible.* To make the fly float has been the great desideratum with fly dressers. The floating May flies of Mr. Ogden, one of the best dressers of trout flies in England, have been widely circulated, and they are, as are all his trout flies, beautiful specimens of skill and neatness. They certainly do attract a great number of fish to rise, and when the fish run large so that in opening their mouths they take the whole fly in a gulp they are most valuable flies, but where the trout are small, as half or three-quarter pounders, there is this objection to them—they are so bushy that when a small trout attempts to seize them he is very apt to run his nose against some of the feathers which stand out from the fly and to drive the hook before him instead of seizing it in his mouth, and thus the fish is often missed and scared entirely, when he really rises fairly to the fly. Their floating capabilities are undeniably excellent; when they get thoroughly wet, however, they take some time to dry. The angler, in using Mr. Ogden's green drakes, should therefore have two or three ready at the same time, so that one may dry while the other is fishing; with respect to the dressing of the fly, it must be borne in mind that the colours and size of many flies vary much in different waters, so much so, that they might almost be supposed to belong to different species.†

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* The heaviest trout I ever killed on dry fly was in the Test at Broadlands. It weighed exactly 6 lb. The May fly was on thick, but I was fishing with a sedge.—Ed.

The bodies of May flies have been dressed of all kinds of materials—India-rubber, crewel, silk, quill, goldbeater's skin, plain gut, stained gut, cork, etc. I shall give two or three bodies which I think are the best. The simplest is of buff or ginger-coloured crewel or silk ribbed with brown silk. At the tail end two or three turns of brown silk (some use peacock herl) should be taken as there is a brown patch at the tail. Over a silk body ribbed thus Mr. Blackler, according to "Ephemera," recommends a strip of goldbeater's skin to be tightly wound. This permits the body colours to be seen distinctly through, gives the glassy shine to the body, and also prevents the body from becoming heavily saturated with water, of course thereby increasing its buoyancy. I can quite imagine that this is a good plan, and I therefore give it; of course the ribbing silk should go over the skin. Of all the composition bodies I think those of cork are the best, but they are not usually dressed to my fancy. The cork itself is not quite the right colour of the fly, and it is usual to tie the strip of cork round the shank of the hook by ribbing it with brown sewing silk. I recommend a better plan. Take a strand of fine floss silk of buff or ginger colour, and lay it on tightly and thinly in open rings, allowing the light brown of the cork to show between as the ribbing. I think this makes as good a body as I know of. The tail should be three strands of brown mallard feather or the same of a brown-red cock's hackle; the legs may be of the light mallard feather stained ginger, some say of the same colour as the wings, but both body and legs are always more ginger or buff-coloured and less of olive-green than the wings; a smallish mallard feather should be selected, one not too long in the fibre, and it should be dressed on the hook hacklewise; the hackle of a grey-speckled hen may be thus stained and used if it be preferred. A plain ginger hackle is often used, or the hackle of a Cochin hen; I have even seen a light brown-red hackle used, and all may be right and all may be wrong at times, according to the locality.

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* This irksome process is quite unnecessary if the fly has been dipped in parafin the day before and the oil allowed to dry, which renders it quite waterproof.—Ed.

† In 1897, as an experiment on the colour sense of fish, I had some May-flies dyed bright scarlet and sky-blue. On 2nd June I landed thirty-one trout and two chub in the Gade at Cassiobury with these unorthodox flies. Only one of these trout weighed less than 1 lb. On 5th June, using similar flies, I landed eleven trout in the Beane at Woodhall Park, Hertford. I kept four brace of these fish weighing 16¾ lb.—Ed.

And now for the wings—these are the fly maker's *bête noir*. The feather most generally used is the grey-barred breast feather of the mallard, dyed more or less of a pale olive-green; another feather is the similar feather of the summer duck or wood duck, undyed or of the natural hue, and this suits also on some waters, and this is my fancy. Some think the barred feather of the silver pheasant's tail preferable, and in some of the Irish lakes I have been assured by old practitioners that nothing can equal it; but I think it rather too strongly marked for our English rivers, though it has the advantage of having a fine glossy shine upon it. Taking, however, the feather of the mallard or wood-duck, whichever we may choose—or whichever we may be able to get, rather—have it dyed of the shade you prefer : it should be, as I have said, of a pale olive-green. The great object is to keep your fly floating ; the feathers should therefore be tied, not in a mass, but two single feathers of the requisite size being selected they should be tied on back to back with the curve natural to the feathers expanding outwards ; the wings will thus, if dry, support the fly on the surface. The angler will always do well to have one or two different patterns in his *box* (for they should not be squeezed up flat in a book or their floating properties will soon be destroyed). He should, moreover, have them of one or two different sizes, the hooks varying from Nos. 3 or 4 to 6, and being always of the lightest and finest wire, and dressed on good fine round olive-green gut.*

Among the ordinary flies that are sold there are not many floating patterns better for work than that sold by Hammond, of Winchester. The body is a light lemon-coloured fur, or a short fibred ostrich herl, stained of the proper colour, and laid on thinly. This is ribbed with fine gold wire or lightish red hackle, dressed from shoulder to tail. The tail, three whisks of a dark blue (almost black) hackle. Wings, two small mallard feathers stained of a darkish olive, or two brownish wood-duck feathers, and set on back to back over the shoulder a couple of turns of a grey partridge hackle ; but as this is rather too white, I generally dip it in strong tea for a few minutes, which takes off the whiteness. This is a capital fly, and I have killed many good baskets of fish with it. There is no better pattern for the Hampshire streams.

On many lakes, particularly in Ireland, the May fly season is the only one when really good sport is to be had with the fly. The green drake I chiefly use is one which is of my own fancy. I employ the cork body, with floss silk rings previously mentioned. Instead of silk or herl I touch the tail part with shellac varnish, as being a much better imitation of the brown patch than either of the others. Tail, two whisks of brown mallard ; legs, ginger or buff Cochin hackle ; and wings, four hackle points, two long and two short, for the superior and inferior wings or poisers, dressed well outwards, so as to support the fly on the water. These hackles should be the grizzled and blue dun hackle found on the Andalusian cock ; those which have a brilliant transparent point, on being held up to the light, being preferred for the superior wings. They should be stained a pale yellow, and this on the blue ground gives the exact tinge of the May fly wing. The darker the original feather, the more green it will be, and the lighter the more yellow, and thus it can be varied to suit the river, as the flies vary much in colour. I do not think this particular hue is to be got so well in any other way. The hackle point being held up to the light gives a transparency which no close or solid feather will. To my mind, it is a capital imitation, and I am very sure, after four years' experience of it, that the fish think so too, for I have killed many a good basket of fish with it when I could not get them to take any other patterns which I had in my book. I had several very striking evidences of its superiority even during the past season, killing a large quantity of fine fish with it. In one instance, on the Kennett, I had killed many fish with one. It was rather worn, and after lunch I was about to change it, when the proprietor of the water, a very good fisherman, who knew his own water exceedingly well, advised me to try in preference another fly of a different pattern, as better suited to his fish. I took his advice, and fished for half an hour without a rise, coming over many rising fish in vain. At length I bethought me of giving my old favourite another turn, and I changed back again, and begun to kill fish with it immediately, continuing to do so for the rest of the day. On another river I killed in one afternoon seven and a half brace of splendid fish with it, while my companion, who was fishing with another pattern, took but a brace of small fish. I lent him one of mine, and he lost it in a good fish. Unfortunately, I was so short in my stock that I could not supply him further. These are facts which others can testify to, and therefore I mention them. It does not float so well as the mallard wing, and it is a very difficult fly to get *properly dressed*. It consumes so many hackles, of a rather scarce colour, that tackle makers often get it a bad name by putting in any feathers that come to hand. It is also a very troublesome fly to make, and the dressers don't care about dressing it, and I believe often bless me heartily for inventing it.

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* Flies for *dry* fishing are now invariably dressed on eyed hooks.—ED.

The Grey Drake (Plate VIII, Fig. 2, p. 134) is, as I have said, the transformation of the female green drake, and towards evening its capabilities are of more value than during the day. It is dressed, as regards the body and legs, much after the fashion of the green drake, but several shades lighter. The wing feathers, however, should be of their natural colour, and undyed. The legs are often dressed with the same feather. It is not, however, nearly so valuable a fly as the green drake.

though, as I have said, useful for evening fishing. I never did a great deal of good with it, preferring to use the green drake even in the evening.

The Coch y bondu, Shorn Fly, Hazel Fly, Marlow Buzz, Fernwebb, Bracken clock, etc. (see Plate VIII, Fig. 20, p. 134), by all of which names this little beetle is known as a great favourite with the trout. It comes in with the warm June weather, though used as early as March, as regards its supposed imitation. It is advantageously used in daping. It resembles a very diminutive cockchafer, and may be seen in great numbers, winging its heavy but rapid flight through the sunshine, or settled on the leaves and grass near the river side. The ordinary way to dress it is to make a fat body of dark copper-coloured peacock's herl, mixed equally with black ostrich. It is customary to dress it buzz, as to the wings and legs, with a dark red hackle, with a black streak up the centre. Dressed in this way, it will kill on most rivers, more or less, throughout the season, though it is needless to say that it is not out save for a somewhat limited period in the month of June. As I have stated elsewhere, it may kill thus in consequence of its bearing a resemblance to other insects.

The Fern Fly (see Plate VIII, Fig. 21, p. 134).—This is another winged beetle. There are two kinds, the one having reddish-orange wing cases, and the other blue. They are well known to children, from this circumstance, as "soldiers and sailors." They may be found creeping up the stems of the grass and other plants overhanging the water. A shake dislodges them, and they fall helplessly into the water, where they are devoured by the fish. Although dull in its movements, and slow in taking to flight, yet when it has expanded its wing cases, and unfolded its wings (a very circumspect and deliberate operation with it), it flies strongly, and makes a much braver and larger appearance than it does when it plumps up against your coat or hat or a spray of grass, and folding up its wings (always with a little bit of the under wing visible at the tail end of the wing cases, under which it at length is gathered, and gradually disappears) resumes its scarabean appearance. I have had fair sport with this fly. The red one is the one chiefly imitated by anglers. Hook, No. 9 or 10; body, orange-yellow or orange crewel; legs, red hackle; wings, hen pheasant's wing feather. Some prefer dark starling, and some dress the hackle over the wing, and this serves both for legs and the wing cases and is perhaps the best imitation.

Sha

The Yellow Sally should be mentioned here, as it has a place in all angling works, and a high character with some anglers. I have no faith in it, however, and never took fish with it but once, and although I have often seen swarms of it rising, I have very seldom seen the trout much enamoured of it. A straggler will be taken now and then; and once, as I have said, I found the trout taking it well, and others tell me that they have done so likewise. I give the dressing, and the angler can please himself. Body, pale yellow crewel, ribbed with light tawny brown silk; legs, pale lemon-coloured hackle; wings, some light transparent feather, stained of the palest watery yellow. A keeper once told me, as a reason for the fish refusing this fly, that "they was too bitter altogether." Hook, No. 10.

The Barm Fly.—This fly, which is of the trichopterous order, and belonging to the Phryganidæ, is an evening fly. I find no mention of it in any book but Jackson's. It is a capital fly, and a very general favourite in the southern and midland counties. I can speak to its slaughterous propensities, having killed well with it on the Wandle, the Darenth, and the Colne, where it has a local repute, under the name of "the nobbler," and on the Itchen, where it is wrongly called a sedge, and is dressed with a dark wing for the evening. It seldom comes out till dusk and thus has no doubt escaped more particular notice.* Body, fat and large, of fur of a light creamy brown hue; hackle red; wing, dark speckled cock pheasant; hooks, Nos. 7 and 8.

The Fœtid Brown, or mushroom fly, is one of the same order and genus as the last. It has its name from its emitting a faint fœtid odour when handled. It is not very much appreciated by anglers generally. On warm evenings, towards the end of May, and throughout June and July, it may be seen in small whisks or swarms, skipping up and down over the water—now amongst the willows low upon the water, now high in the air, seldom settling, but constantly hovering over the water. It is a fine, fat, and tempting bait, and late in the afternoon, or early in the evening, may be seen thickly on the water. Dress it on a No. 8 or 9 hook; body full, of mixed hare's ear and water-rat fur; a few strands of hare's ear picked out for the legs on a grizzled blue dun hackle may be used; wings also full and little—starling for the under wing, and corncrake over it.

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* A curious fact with respect to this fly is that it appears to take to and quit certain localities for years. On the Colne, when I first became acquainted with it, it was plentiful and a first-rate killer for three or four years. It then disappeared for two years, and the trout altogether refused the imitation. This last season, however, it has reappeared, and now takes there as well as ever.—F. F.

The Caperer is another fly of the same class as the last. It is a large fly, and comes out towards evening, its motions as it flits up and down, from the bank to the water, justifying its name. There is a smaller fly of the same kind called the skip-jack. It is dressed upon a No. 7 or 8 hook, some using it of even larger size. Two turns of gold twist at the tail; body, brownish rusty red mohair; legs, red cock's hackle, not too dark; wings, the marbled portion of the hen pheasant's wing feather. It is in great request in the midland counties, especially on the Kennett, and I am sure would make a capital lake trout fly.

The flies necessary for June are the green and grey drakes, the sedge and alder being great holdfasts. Duns and spinners, already noted, abound, and must not be neglected. The fœtid brown and caperer should have a place in the book as a change with the alder and sedge for evenings. The coch y bondu, of course, and the fern fly sometimes will be useful. Midges must have a place; though seldom very useful now, they do later on.

JULY.—*The Red and Black Ants* are very favourite flies during July: they are of course more plentiful on some waters, and during some seasons, than others.

The Red Ant should be tied on a No. 8, 9, or 10 hook. The body of peacock herl, left *au naturel* as regards the lower or tail half, and tied in at the waist with copper-coloured silk; the legs, a red cock's hackle, and wings of the light shining part of a starling's feather.

The Black Ant should be tied similarly, save that the body should be composed of black ostrich and peacock herl mixed and tied in at the waist, with black silk; legs black cock's hackle, and wings of the darker portion of the starling's feather.

The House Fly.—There is a fly very similar in appearance to the house fly, but I do not think it is the same—being less neat and more ragged in its appearance than the house fly, looking rather, if I may use the expression, like a dissipated house fly out of luck—which is found in the fields, and a good deal by the river side, and on the water during the warm months. It may at times be used with great advantage, when other flies fail; and I have had good sport with it. It is so similar to the house fly, that one dressing will serve both. Hook, No. 9, body fat, and of two or three strands of any rusty dark bluish feather from the heron's back, wound on as though it were herl. Tied in on each side, at the tail, are two fine shreds of buff-coloured silk; these are brought up the sides and tied in when the body is finished off, to represent the whitish streaks along the sides of the natural fly. Legs, black cock's hackle; wings, the dark part of a starling's wing—these should be dressed as flatly as may be convenient.

The house flies are more abundant, and kill better on the water towards the end of the season, however, as they are then getting weak and blind.

Hammond's Adopted.—A fly of the fœtid brown kind, but with lightish spots or markings on the wings, is often to be seen sporting like the fœtid brown, and even with it on many rivers; it is the *brown skipjack* of some localities. I do not find it noticed much in any tackle book, unless it be the light pied dun of Theakstone. I should not dress it precisely as he does, however, preferring dark hare's ear and mole's fur for the body, a grizzled blue dun hackle for legs, and hen pheasant's wing for the wings; hook No. 8. I believe this is the same fly as is used at Winchester, and on the Itchin, under the name of *Hammond's Adopted*, after Mr. Hammond, the tackle maker there, who does considerable execution with it; and I have found his dressing capital for the evening, both on the Itchin and elsewhere. He employs a medium brown crewel body, a rusty brown red hackle, dressed from tail to head, and a hen pheasant's or woodcock's wing feather for the wing. It answers also for the tribe of small brown moths which come out at night.

The Wrentail, Brown Bent, Froghopper, Jumper, etc. (see Plate VIII, Fig. 22, p. 134).—This little insect, of which there are two or three varieties, may be seen in the fine sunny weather sunning itself on the long spires of grass; when disturbed it hops away, making a prodigious leap for so small a creature; as it is abundant on the river side, its wings constantly leave it on the surface of the water, where the fish eagerly snap it up. It is not an easy fly to imitate; the best way is to dress it buzz on a No. 12 or 13 hook. On a body of yellow silk whirl a tomtit's or a wren's tail feather, or for a change a golden plover hackle. If it does not kill very well, the time when the angler is obliged to use it may have something to do with the reason, as it is chiefly a warm weather fly, and is little seen save in sunshine.

With the warm evenings the moths come into play, and though occasionally they may kill in June, yet July is soon enough to resort to them. The best of them is

The White Moth.—It may be dressed either small, or medium, or large. If large, take a No. 5 or 6 hook; body, of white crewel or white ostrich herl; legs, white hen's hackle; and wings, either a couple of slips of white goose feather, or a bit of the soft under wing of the grey owl. Small size: dress on a No. 8 hook, body as before; legs, a light ginger hackle; two feathers from about the eye of the grey owl make the prettiest wing—in default, however, use goose. I have seen these small moths taken by the trout in the daytime, and I once saw a trout chase one that was fluttering some inches above the water for several yards, and end by throwing himself out of the water and catching it in the air.

The Brown Moth.—Body, yellowish-brown crewel; wings, speckled brown owl; legs, light brown hackle.

There are many other moths, of course, which get upon the water in the evening, but these are the best and most likely ones to take fish with.

About the end of June, or beginning of July, various midges come upon the water, and on them, early on fine warm evenings, the trout are wont to feed ravenously. They are so difficult to imitate, however, as to be nearly impracticable. One very favourite one is

The Green Midge, a very delicate little insect. It should be dressed only on the finest possible hooks and gut, with a small floss silk body of a delicate apple-green colour, the wings and legs being dressed buzz, with a very fine soft pale silvery blue hen's hackle.

The Blue Midge should be dressed like the green midge, save that the body should be of a pale slate hue. It is a useful afternoon fly.

Several duns find their way to the surface during this month. I think they are but repetitions, or, at any rate, very near relations, of earlier flies, as they very closely resemble them.

The Ashy Dun is a lightish blue dun, a size or two smaller than the original blue dun. Body, silvery grey, the colour of ash bark; wings, light starling; hackle, pale blue dun.

There are so many flies on in July, that it is hard to say which are the best, many of the May and June flies being still as good as any that can be employed. Of the new flies, the ant flies where they are much found cannot be done without, moths, and the July and ashy dun; and the Phryganidæ mentioned are particularly valuable.

The July Dun very closely resembles the little iron-blue. It is perhaps one shade lighter and one size larger.

The Large Yellow Dun (p. 152) also comes on tolerably thickly at times.

The Black Silver Horns (see Plate VIII, Fig. 19, p. 134).—This is a curious-looking trichopterous fly, which may be seen in great numbers upon piers, bridges, and such places. It looks like a small black shred. The horns, from which it derives its name, are very remarkable, being much longer than the body, and ringed alternately in black and white. It is a favourite with the fish, particularly in the north of France. Dress it on a No. 9 or 10 hook, with dark lead-coloured silk body, ribbed with yellow; wings, of any fine-grained shiny black feather, dressed rather close; legs, a short-fibred dark slate-coloured hackle, not too much of it; and, if the angler likes to add the horns, two strands of a bright speckled mallard's feather will be a capital imitation. There is another which is perhaps a greater favourite still with the fish, and that is

The Brown Silver Horns.—The following is the dressing of one which I took not long since on the Itchin, when the fish were taking it well. Body, of rusty black ostrich herl, short in the fibre, and spun on brown silk. Along the sides of the fly are two bright buff stripes; these I leave to the angler to imitate or not. Two strips of straw would produce the exact effect, but would make the fly bulky. Hackle, dark grizzled dun; wings (under), dark starling, (over) land-rail, dressed as closely to the body as may be.

August.—Not many new flies come on the water during this month. Many of the old ones, however, may be used. The principal fly that makes its appearance is

The August Dun, August Brown, etc. (see Plate VIII, Fig. 10, p. 134).—A capital and very general fly, somewhat resembling the March brown but smaller. Dress it upon a No. 9 or 10 hook. Mr. Ronalds' pattern is pretty good—brown floss silk (he should have added " light ") ribbed with yellow for body; tail, two rabbit's whiskers (this is a mistake, rabbit's whiskers are too stiff for this purpose, use strands of the hackle); wings, from a brown hen's wing; legs, red hackle, stained brown. Here is Jackson's plan, rather different, but between the two the angler may hit the fly off: Wing, from a young partridge's back or bright hen pheasant's quill (? wing) or grey goose breast; body, light brown silk, or hare's face certainly not, it is a smooth-bodied fly) ribbed with pale yellow silk; grizzled hackle; tail, three strands of the same. Mr. Ronalds adds that, to dress it buzz, a grouse hackle should be wound on the body. The red spinner, which it changes to, is very like that of the blue dun.

The Cinnamon (see Plate VIII, Fig. 16, p. 134).—This well-known fly is one more of the Phryganidæ, and by no means the worst of them. It is something like the sedge fly and strongly resembles the sand fly; it is, however, a size larger, and rather more ruddy. Body of dark straw-coloured silk; legs, a light or dirty brown hen's hackle with a darkish centre —wing, any reddish cinnamon-coloured feather, or yellowish hen landrail or owl, says Jackson; the yellow-brown hen's wing, says Ronalds. It is a capital fly, particularly for the evening. There is another very large fly of this species which seldom comes out till almost dark, when it may be found running rapidly about on bridges and such places. It should be dressed like the sand fly on a No. 6 hook. For lake-fishing it will be found excellent. The wings should be large and full, the tips of two partridge tail feathers or any whole small feather of the same colour being used. The late blue and yellow duns with their spinners, mentioned in the last month, are still found in abundance, and will form the principal attractions for the fish.

The Cow-dung Fly (p. 146) dressed small also kills well.

The Needle Brown (p. 147) is now very plentiful, and on many rivers is a first-rate favourite.

Very diminutive and pale yellow and blue duns, almost impossible to imitate from their smallness and delicacy, are greatly favoured by the fish.

The Large Yellow Dun (p. 152) may also be found in small numbers.

The angler will have to rely upon many of the flies previously noted for August. The only new ones that are indispensable are the August dun, the cinnamon, and, where it is found, the needle-brown.

SEPTEMBER.—There are not many new flies this month, though there are a great abundance and variety at times on the water.

The Whirling Dun is a very noted fly, and I have found it kill well in the evening. As the way in which I have seen it dressed in Hampshire, where I have chiefly used it, differs from both Ronalds and "Ephemera," and they differ somewhat from each other, I shall give the three dressings. Ronalds: Squirrel's red-brown fur mixed with yellow mohair, and tied with yellow silk well waxed; tail, two strands of ginger hackle; wings, darkish starling; legs, ginger hackle. "Ephemera" substitutes water-rat fur for the body, and dun hackle for the tail and legs. In Hampshire, the body is made of the dirty blue feather of the heron's hackle or wing used as a herl, or some other feather of that hue, and warped with yellow silk; legs, dun hackle with a grizzled dark-brown tinge, or, if this cannot be got, a brown-red; tail, the same; and this is the dressing which I prefer; hooks, Nos. 10 and 11. The spinner of this fly resembles the common red spinner.

The Willow Fly (see Plate VIII, Fig. 13, p. 134) much resembles the needle brown, and like it belongs to the neuropterous flies of the family Perlidæ. It is seen on warm days at intervals through the winter. Mr. Ronalds recommends it to be dressed buzz. Body, mole's fur spun on yellow silk; wings and legs, a dark dun cock's hackle, strongly tinged of a copper colour; hook, No. 10 or 11. In Devonshire, it is called the "old besom," elsewhere it is almost universally known as the willow fly.

Many small and delicate duns come on during this month, but the angler will have good imitations in his book from the list already given; and though his best sport will still be had in the evening, yet an occasional raw and gusty day may come to the angler's aid, and, with a gentle tinge of colour from rain on the water, aid him in making up a decent bag. September is usually a better month for the fly-fisher than August—the fish seem to rise better; but for the evening the sedge, cinnamon, barm fly (or nobbler), Hammond's adopted, and flies of that class, with the moths, will be found the chief bill of fare. Earlier in the evening various spinners and duns—particularly the whirling—and on a windy dull day, the willow, with any special fancy of the angler's, must suffice for his *répertoire* from now to the end of the season.

There are many other flies given by good authorities, but to describe them all would be an endless task. I have therefore only added a few general flies which are tried and well-deserved favourites, which may resemble something on or in the waters, but what that something is one can hardly say; probably they resemble various insects, larvæ of beetles, or flies, spiders, etc., to some extent, and hence their favour with the fishes. These flies will kill more or less throughout the season. The angler who cannot kill fish with the list I have furnished will, I fear, find angling unprofitable. Any good angler would kill with half of them. I doubt if I use more than a score of flies in the season. The flies most in favour with me, and which are by far the best of all for the angler to place his hopes upon, are the duns and their changes the spinners. I do not think there is any stream where from one end of the season to the other some of these delicate little flies will not be found to kill, *therefore the angler should always be provided with a good stock and variety of them.* There is a great number of them, of various shades and sizes, but the angler will greatly simplify matters if he will act according to the following advice:—

Have two sizes of each fly—let the largest be dressed on a No. 10 hook, and the smallest on a No. 12 or smaller if required. Of blue duns he should have four shades—very dark for the iron-blue; a shade lighter for the later swarms of that fly; next, the ordinary blue dun, and lastly, a light pale blue dun, almost silvery. The three darkest of these shades should be ribbed with fine yellow glovers' silk; the light one need not be. The wings and hackles should keep pace with the bodies in shade. Of yellow duns the angler should have one size only of the large yellow dun previously mentioned; the common yellow dun, one size; a lighter buff-coloured, two sizes; a lighter still of almost a grey silk, two sizes; and one with an apple-green body. If he chooses further to vary these shades by running one into the other or by even medium tints of olive, yellow, and green, so much the better. The olives vary a good deal, and most of these have darkish wings and yellowish legs. One or two of these flies have very clear wings, particularly the lighter ones, and should be dressed buzz. Of spinners the angler should have, of the red, two sizes; the brown, two sizes; a lighter brown, two sizes. As I have already said, next to these are the Phryganidæ, a small selection of which must not be neglected.

With these flies in his book he need not fear to venture on almost any stream; of course there are times when other flies, which are prime favourites when they come on, will kill better. I shall presently give a short list of flies, as they are requisite to a tolerably complete equipment.

GENERAL FLIES

Of the general flies which are most useful to the angler, and which he will find it very advisable to have a stock of, there are, first,

The Francis Fly.—It may seem egotism in me to place this fly first on the list; but since its invention, from the accounts I have had of its qualifications, from all parts of Great Britain, from various parts of Europe, and indeed from all quarters of the globe where Salmonidæ are found, it certainly appears to have gained, as I hope, a well-earned reputation. I first found it kill well on the Welsh rivers, where I tested it severely against the far-famed coch y bondu; and in whatever position it was placed, whether as stretcher or dropper, it killed above three fish for one killed by the coch y bondu. I therefore brought it into public notice, and it was greatly favoured; but, neglecting it for a season, I did not use it much; by accident, however, I tried it subsequently in other quarters with the greatest success, and since that time, wherever I have gone, I have found it an unfailing resource when many other favourites failed. It should be dressed, of course, to suit the water: small for light waters, and large for heavy waters or for evening fishing. I have killed well with it dressed on a No. 11 or 12 hook, and equally well (where it was suitable) on a 7, 8, or 9. The body is composed of copper-coloured peacock's herl, ribbed distinctly with copper-red silk; hackle, medium blue dun; wings, two hackle points of a grizzly blue dun cock's hackle (not a hen's), set well up. It is an excellent evening and night fly dressed on a No. 7 or 8 hook, owing to the lively and attractive play of the hackle point wings. Dressed large it kills sea trout well, and it has even slaughtered many a lordly salmon; while I have seen large numbers of it, dressed like some huge moth, sent out to India to kill mahseer amongst the Himalayas.

The Coachman.—This is one of the best evening and night flies, particularly in the midland and southern rivers, that I know of; and even in the daytime it kills well on some streams. Hook, No. 9, 10, or 11; body, peacock herl; legs, red cock's hackle; wings, any small white feather, or slip of the same. I suppose that the contrast of the dark body and white wings renders it easily perceived by the fish, hence its attractiveness from May till the end of the season.

Hofland's Fancy.—This is another very useful fly, and should be dressed of two sizes, Nos. 10 and 12. Body, dark brown-red silk; wings, hen pheasant or woodcock's wing; legs, red cock's hackle; tail, two strands of the same. It is very useful on fine waters, having a partial resemblance to several small flies.

The Governor.—This is a very useful fly on many waters, particularly in the metropolitan district, where its use is almost general. I usually have three sizes of this fly by me; it is dressed of all sizes, from a No. 7 to a No. 10 or 11 hook. It is useful by day tied small, and as an evening fly, on a No. 7 hook. Body, peacock's herl, dressed full and finished off at the tail with two or three turns of bright orange-yellow floss silk. It is sometimes an improvement to add some gold twist, and I have done good work with it with a fine ribbing of gold twist; legs, red cock's hackle; wing, hen pheasant's wing; with a grey drake wing it makes a capital late evening fly. The original is, I believe, not a fly, but a beetle.

The Edmead.—This is a fly which is a good deal used about the midland districts. Originally it was dressed, I believe, with a bluish body, but the red body has been found to kill best. It is a red-spinner body and hackle, with a grey drake wing, dressed on about 10 or 11 hook.

In the north they have a fly called

*Greenwell's Glory.**—It kills well on all the northern streams, and I am greatly mistaken if it will not kill equally well in the south. Hook, No. 12 or 13; body, dark olive silk, thickly ribbed with very fine gold wire; legs, a small dark coch-y-bondu hackle (red with black centre and tips); wings, woodcock's wing. Dressed on the smallest possible hook, it kills well in the hottest weather.

The Grouse Hackle.—A capital hot-weather fly dressed hacklewise on a No. 11 or 12 hook, with a small hen grouse hackle, and a yellow silk body with one turn of gold tinsel at the tail.

The Partridge Hackle.—Dressed similarly to the last fly, but with a grey partridge hackle and a lemon silk body.

The last two flies, with the next one, and a black gnat, perhaps, will fill a basket on any mountain beck or trout burn in heather districts. They may be used a size or two larger if necessary.

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* Designed by the late Canon Greenwell, of Durham, who is also the eponymus of the Greenwell salmon fly, a favourite on the Tweed.—Ed.

Soldier Palmer.—A capital fly in warm weather, particularly when the water is a little coloured. Hook, No. 9, 10, or 11; body, bright red crewel, ribbed with gold thread; legs and wings, a bright red cock's hackle, struck from tail to head. I usually have two sizes of this fly in my book; it is always well worth a trial if the angler is at a loss towards evening, and if there be a scarcity of fly.

I cannot pass over this branch of my subject without noticing the flies used by Mr. Stewart. He principally employs six, three of which are termed spiders, and three winged flies. Their sizes are from No. 12 to 15 of the Kendal or round bend hooks; and they are dressed sparely, with very little body and not too much hackle. The spiders are merely hackle or buzz flies, and are of three kinds.

1. *The Black Spider.*—This is made with the small feather of the cock starling, dressed with brown silk.
2. *The Red Spider* is made with the small feather taken from the outside of the landrail's wing, dressed with yellow silk.
3. *The Dun Spider* is made from the small soft dun or ash-coloured feather taken from the outside of the dotterel's wing, failing that from the inside wing of the starling.

The winged flies are as follows:—

1. A woodcock wing, with a single turn of red hackle or landrail, dressed with yellow silk freely exposed in the body. For coloured water it may be dressed with scarlet thread.
2. Hare lug body, with a corn bunting or chaffinch wing; a woodcock wing may be put to the same body, but should be made from the small light-coloured feather from the inside of the wing.
3. Woodcock wing with a single turn of a soft black hen hackle, or a small feather taken from the shoulders of the starling, dressed with dark-coloured silk.

Mr. Stewart adds that, by varying the wings and body, a great number of killing flies may be made, but he pins his faith upon the above six patterns; and certainly with these flies varied in size, and with the assistance of worm, minnow, and larva, there are few more successful anglers in the south of Scotland or on the Border than Mr. Stewart.

I here subjoin, to simplify matters for the young angler, a list of flies which I find sufficient usually for all general purposes, and which I do not like to be without:—

Duns and spinners, as before-mentioned, of various shades.
The March brown.
The cow-dung.
*The gravel bed (this is only indispensable where it is found).
The black gnat and quill gnat.
The alder.
Green and *grey drakes.
The coch-y-bondu.
The sedge fly.
*The blue and green midges.
The red and black ants.
The August dun.
The cinnamon.
*The needle brown.
The willow fly.
*The barm fly.
The white and *brown moths.
The Francis.
The governor.
The coachman.
Hammond's adopted.
The Hofland's fancy.
The soldier palmer.
The grouse and partridge hackles.

The flies with a star against them are those which the angler may best venture to omit if he finds even this list too long. The remainder I look on as indispensable for *general* work. Of course, if the angler knows and fishes any particular river, he may get through the season well enough perhaps with a bare dozen of flies. If he wanders at all, he will do well to have all the above flies, and specially and particularly the duns and spinners. Most people have preferences, and I have mine, and if I were to choose the two flies which I do most with in the course of a year, I would select the alder and the yellow dun in various shades, and next to them the blue dun sedge, soldier palmer, and the governor.

LAKE TROUT FLIES

These flies are legion, each lake and each professor on that lake having his own varieties, which are not governed by any rules but those of fancy, and being imitations of nothing in nature, the patterns are endless. I shall give a few which I know to be general killers—more particularly in Scotland, though no doubt equally good all over the kingdom.

The most favourite wings are dark mallard and the barred feather of the teal; to these may be wedded almost any body and legs and they will kill *more or less*.

The size very much depends on the depth of the water, but from 5 or 6 to 8 or 9 hooks will be about the range, though smaller are often used.

1. Teal wing; red cock's hackle from head to tail; a dirty rusty black silk body, with or without gold thread.

2. Teal wing; black silk body, black cock's hackle from head to tail, and silver thread. An excellent fly.

3. The same with mallard wing.

4. Mallard wing; claret mohair body; claret hackle (a shade or two lighter); gold thread. This may be varied slightly and advantageously with a red or a black cock's hackle.

5. Mallard wing; fiery brown mohair body; black hackle and gold twist.

If there be salmon about the last four flies of sea trout size will often rise them.

6. Teal wing; orange crewel or floss body; red hackle, gold thread.

7. Wing from jay's wing, of pale bluish tinge and darkish towards the butt; body and hackle as in No. 1.

8. Wing as in the last fly; body, dark blue silk; fine silver twist, and black hackle. May be varied with an orange-yellow silk body, and gold twist. A good sea trout fly.

9. Wing as before; body, hare's ear and water-rat fur mixed—hare's ear predominating, and picked out for legs.

10. Body, olive mohair, with fine gold wire ribbing; golden olive hackle—that is, greenish olive to appearance, but golden when held up to the light; wing, a lightish bit of jay's wing. This is a celebrated fly in Ireland, where it is known as the "Golden olive." It may be varied with a black hackle or a teal wing.

I have no special belief in these fancy flies—they may kill or they may not. The soldier palmer is about the only fancy fly I ever use on lakes, and that I rarely fish without. But I generally find a March brown, a blue dun, a red spinner, an August dun, a red fly, a caperer, very often a small green or grey drake, and the white moth, or some well-known and marked fly, kill on almost any lake as well as the best and most favourite local monstrosities that can be selected; and I have fished on a great many wild lakes in Ireland, Scotland, and Wales, and could nearly always do as well as my neighbours, and often better. I generally commence with a March brown and a soldier palmer and seldom want to change. If a change be needed, orange and grouse, or blue dun, or black and teal should do the business.

Since the first edition of this work was published, the Rev. H. Ainslie has written to me enclosing patterns of six lake flies for use upon any large rough lake. These flies are admirable in appearance, and are evidently the handiwork of a master; they have been well tested on many of the larger Scotch lakes. From this gentleman's remarks I extract the following:—

DEAR SIR,—

First, I wish to endorse what you say on p. 232 of your new work, viz., that fish may be taken on the Scotch lakes with most of the usual English river flies. Of these I prefer the yellow dun, the red spinner (great), the soldier, black gnat, black palmer, and alder (I take these from Ronalds), and I have used these with great success in perfectly still water, or with the slightest curl. But for rougher water—and the Scotch lakes are ordinarily rough enough—I use larger flies, and I enclose you patterns of my especial favourites.

Nos. 1, 2, 3 are irresistible; 4, 5, 6 are nearly as deadly.

Referring to the *ten flies* described by you on pp. 232, 233, I find your No. 4 somewhat similar to my No. 2, of which I should say the body ought to be a bright red; it is much more deadly, as I have often proved, but I have not one in my possession quite to my liking. My No. 1 is your alternative of No. 10. I have used both dressings, and can affirm that teal wing kills six to one of the light jay. It is *true to nature*, for I have often caught the natural fly, of which it is a good representation. My No. 3 is excellent, especially in cold rough weather and rain. I use it two sizes larger on Loch Awe, and find it most persuasive. No. 4 is a very useful fly, and I sometimes use it with a brighter and lighter yellow body with gold twist. It is admirable on fine clear water. No. 5 is more killing in rough, but not cold weather; and No. 6 is local, only suited to some lochs high up on the moors.

I don't know whether the woodcock wing feather or the teal's is the more killing. I can only say that with these flies I can reckon on six dozen per diem, and have killed as many as ten dozen in half a day. I wish when you have an opportunity you would give them a trial.

Very faithfully yours,

H. AINSLIE.

The following is the dressing of each of these flies :—

1. Body, medium green crewel, fine gold thread; hackle, a rusty coch-y-bondu, with very little red showing; teal wing; tail, two fibres of the golden pheasant sword feather.

2. Body, dark red crewel; black hackle; teal wing; a turn of gold tinsel at tail; tail, fibres of gold pheasant ruff.

3. Body, dirty reddish brown (about the colour of tolerably used leather), well ribbed up with gold thread; hackle, a brownish red,

with a little black at the head; tail, two fibres of sword feather; wing, woodcock's wing.

4. Body, a lightish yellow rather thinly laid on; hackle, a sandy red; tail, two fibres of red parrot; a turn of gold tinsel at tail; wing, woodcock.

5. Body, lower half lightish yellow, upper scarlet, ribbed with gold thread; hackle, a brown red with dark centre; tail, two fibres of sword feather; wing, woodcock.

6. Body, bright medium blue well ribbed with fine gold tinsel; tail, two fibres of red hackle; dressed buzz, with the small blue barred feathers of the jay; wing, with most fibres on the wing, those on the breast being clipped slightly.

In Nos. 1, 2, 4 and 5, the wool is picked out a little.

All the hooks are of the round bend, and the numbers run from 5 to 7, but the shanks are shorter than they are in my scale by a full quarter of an inch or more.

Here are half a dozen patterns for Welsh lakes. They are the pets of Llyn Ogwen, and were sent me by an artist of note who dwells on the banks; they are beautifully tied, and will be useful on any of the Welsh lakes.

1. Orange mohair, gold tinsel and grouse hackle (buzz).
2. Black ostrich heil, silver tinsel; black hackle; slips of a clearly specked grouse feather for the wing.
3. Copper-coloured peacock herl; red hackle, stained orange, with a black butt or bottom to it (buzz).
4. Copper-coloured peacock herl; black hackle; light starling wing.
5. Black ostrich herl and silver thread; black hackle; medium starling wing.
6. Body and tinsel as in No. 5; hackle stained bright red of a lake colour; wing, dark starling or blackbird.

These flies are small, and are dressed on No. 11 and 12 hooks, but they can be enlarged to suit the taste and fancy of the angler or the fish.

With the list I have given, and the following list for the west of Ireland lakes and streams, more particularly in Kerry, and which were sent me by Haynes of Cork, and are beautifully tied, the lake angler may consider his quiver full even to repletion. I describe the flies as I find them in the parcel:—

1. Is neither more nor less than the common blue dun. Blue dun body; ditto hackle; and starling wing, two whisks for tail.
2. Is a small March brown.
3. Is the August dun.
4. Medium orange floss body and gold thread; black hackle; medium starling wing; mallard whisks for tail.

5. Body, tail, tinsel, as in No. 4; light blue dun hackle, and light starling wing.

6. Body and tail as before, but with no tinsel; dark brown hackle, and wing from speckled feather of partridge's tail.

7. Black floss body, and fine silver thread; black hackle; dark starling wing; two whisks of grey mallard for tail.

8. A turn of gold tinsel at tail; tail, two brown mallard whisks; body, rufous (red hair colour); red hackle, and medium starling wing.

9. Tinsel and tail as before; cinnamon silk body; medium brown hackle, dressed buzz rather long and spidery.

10. Tail and tinsel as before; body, lemon-yellow floss; hackle as in No. 9, with fibres from the speckled feather of a partridge's tail for wing.

11. Blue dun body, tail, and hackle, with silver thread over body, and fibres from grouse or woodcock hackle for wing.

12. Tail and tinsel as before; body, soft brown fur, water-rat's probably, left rough for legs; starling wing.

These flies are on No. 10, 11, and 12 hooks.

CHAPTER VII

ON LAKE-FISHING

Lake-Fishing—Daping—The Creeper—The Beetle—The Worm

IN lake-fishing, the *modus operandi* will depend very much upon whether the angler fishes from a boat or from the shore. In the first event, his task is a comparatively easy one, as he will drift along with very little use from the paddles more than is required to keep the boat straight and the proper distance from the shore. He will rarely paddle himself; but if he should, he will need to know something of the shores of the loch and where the trout frequent. If he has a boatman, the boatman will probably know the best spots to go to, and the lay of the trout.

It is always desirable, in a boat, to cast in towards the shore. The distance the boat must be kept from the shore will be entirely determined by the weeds, and by the precipitous nature or otherwise of the shores of the lake. The most advantageous depths at which the trout will be found to lie, run from two to five or six feet; beyond this the water will be probably too deep for the trout to see conveniently, and to rise from at the fly. On a calm evening, however, the best trout will often be found lying close in to the shore with their backs almost out of the water, and here they will take fly after fly, with scarcely more motion than a trout of a quarter of a pound would be supposed to make; but in these calm evenings don't be deceived, brother piscator, by the very little disturbance they make when rising close in shore. Approach softly and cast deftly, your quarry may be but a three or four-inch fry, but it may be a rattling two-pounder, and if you go carelessly, all you will see of him will be a severe wave bowling off and widening away into the middle of the loch, and "Confound it! what a whopper!" if you be an ordinary kind of angler, or "Dear me! what a remarkably fine fish! how very unfortunate!" if you be particular in language, will be your farewell to him, whereas with caution he might have been tempted to carry your hook with him.

Some people think that it matters not in lake-fishing how you cast, for that it is a lazy careless sort of sport, to be carried out anyhow; but remember this, friend student, if a thing be worth doing at all it is worth doing well, and if a little extra care will put you a brace or two of unusually fine fish above the careless angler who has simply scared a brace or two of big ones by bungling casting, rowing, or walking, you will own that the triumph is not only deserved but worth reaping. When you feel tired, careless, and bored, leave off, smoke your pipe, eat your lunch, and contemplate the scenery until you see some good fish move and you become keen and eager again. If you do not, it is a hundred to one that you regret it, for somehow it is always when you are thus lazy and careless that the big ones seem to find it out, and to take advantage of you; and just as you are thinking least of fish and fishing, and have mechanically cast your fly out to its full extent, when the point of the rod is well down, up he comes, perhaps with a splash that frightens you out of your wits. You strike hurriedly and five times as hard as you ought to do, and all the harder because the stroke comes from the butt instead of from the top. A heavy fish and light tackle, with a hard strike tells its story; and away goes your pet fly, and you have no other of the same pattern within five miles—

> The waters wild close o'er the child,
> And you are left lamenting.

And serve you right, too. Oh, yes, put up another fly in a hurry, and fish away as hard as you can, of course, for the next half-hour; he is sure to come to you again, isn't he? And then you come home and find that Jones, who isn't half as good a fisherman as you are, and is only patient and painstaking, has a couple of much better fish than any you have. "Ah! if you'd only—but no matter, you won't be had in that way again." Perhaps not. *Nous verrons.* I hate a lazy fisherman.

If the weather be calm do not neglect the windward shore, as in the very curl of the small wave you will often get a pull from the very best fish. If there be a streak of foam, as there usually is on brisk days, pitch your fly into it and you will often be rewarded, as many flies get entangled in the froth and cannot get out of it: the fish know this well. (I forget where

I have read this advice—I fancy it is Stoddart's—but it is good advice).* If, however, the weather be rough, you will be compelled to fish the leeward shores. Avoid the places where the rocks are precipitous and the shores steep, and choose the little sandy bays and pebbly strands; fish the edges of weeds or reeds very carefully—they are favourite harbours for the best fish. Wherever you see little islets of rocks or cairns, by no means pass them without a trial. If trees border the loch, under them will be found the scaly prey waiting for whatever heaven or the wind may send them by shaking the leaves. Where streams and rivulets enter the lake, you should be particularly sedulous in your attentions, as here you will be sure to find sport of the best. If, when in a boat, you hook a good fish, remember that the first thing he will inevitably do is to dart off the shallow into the deeper water; take care that in doing so he does not dart under the boat, as not unfrequently happens. Nothing is so absurd as to see a stalwart angler with his rod perfectly upright and the fish gone under his feet. You have not the least power over a fish that has served you so; and if the boat be, as the boat of the Celt too often is, ragged as to her bottom, with rusty nails, a broken sheathing, etc., your line will probably be cut, or if only hung up, what with poking it clear and other expedients, the line will be so frayed as to be useless. If the boat does not catch it something else may, and probably when you get all clear again you will find that the errant fish has left your stretcher, and possibly the dropper too, fast in a lump of tough mossy weed fathoms below, and is himself " Liber et exultans ardet *piscis* in *aquis*." Always contrive, if possible, to keep the fish under the point of the rod, and never, as far as it can possibly be avoided, under the butt. The rod must be *nearly* upright when the fish is gaffed or netted, but that is the only time when it should be so. Take care, too, when the fish is gaffed or netted and dropped into the boat, to loosen your line or drop the point or the sudden call on the top may snap it. Knock the fish on the head at once for many reasons, and waste no time in admiration, for when they are "in the humour" is the time to "take them."

In lake-fishing I have found the greatest advantage at times in making the drop fly skim and dib along the surface of the water as it comes towards you. This you cannot well manage on a stream, but on a lake in still water it will often be found

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* It is in chapter iv of Stoddart's *Angler's Companion*.—Ed.

"very successful." Indeed, on a dropper worked thus, I have often taken three or four fish for one to the stretcher. In fishing from the shore, say outside a piece of weed, look out sharply when the dropper trips up thus towards the edge of the weed, and it will often prove irresistible to the best fish. Remember that, though you have no stream in a lake, you have wind, with which the flies will drift just as naturally as they will in a stream; and it is not advisable, *if you can avoid it*, to draw your flies against it, as it is unnatural, and will challenge attention and often scare the best fish, though small ones may not mind it.

In fishing from the shore, you will often have to wade. If the wind be blowing sharply along the shore you fish, get it at your back and walk cautiously on, a step at a time, casting outwards first, and then in the segment of a circle, the last cast terminating almost on the shore. Then take another step, or perhaps two, and repeat the process, making as little disturbance as you can; but always look well to your footing, and feel your way onward, or a big, round, or slippery stone will bring you suddenly to grief.

If you be a smoker, brother angler, take care (and this will apply equally perhaps to river-fishing) to knock the fire quite out of your pipe before you pocket it, or you may chance to do as I did once when wading along the strand on that prince of lakes, Lough Melvin. I was having great sport, and fancying my pipe was out, popped it hastily into my pocket without consideration. After a time I smelt an unpleasant smell of burning. At first I thought it but the smoke from something burning on the land, and paid no attention to it. Presently my thigh warned me of a sensation of heat; I thrust my hand into my pocket—it was on fire. I hastily turned out the contents. My pocket was in large holes; the coat even was singed through, my handkerchief destroyed, and, worse than all, the extreme edge of my tackle-book singed smartly. When I came to inspect it, "*O dies miserabilis*!" ten or a dozen beautiful exquisitely fine new casting-lines, of a delicate amber colour, done up in coils of eight or ten inches circumference (which I had laid in for my campaign, but three days previously, at Farlow's), were just burnt through—only just—in one spot, thus reducing the whole of them to irreparable and useless fragments. Oh, the trouble I had in picking those lines! for I am very particular and choice in my trout-casts. I sent for more, but I could not replace those I had lost; and to this day, of course, I believe that there never were any others equal to them.

Some lakes are what are called " free rising lakes " ; others are but moderately so, the fish being more capricious and apparently shyer, and sport, though sometimes good, is less certain in them. These lakes often have better fish than the " free risers." Some, again, are termed " sulky lakes," and are very hard to get fish from at all, though occasionally, but rarely, splendid sport will be had on them. I have dealt rather fully upon the rationale of this in my former work upon Fish Culture, and I make no doubt but the reasons I have there given are the correct ones. It is a question altogether of food and the depth of the water. On many lakes there is but one time in the year when you get anything like sport, and that is when the May fly is on. The Westmeath lakes, Lough Erne, and Lough Arrow, in Sligo, are excellent examples of this latter peculiarity. In the former, particularly, sport to any extent, except at this time, is exceptional. When the May fly is on, the sport is often splendid, the fish running very large. At other times the fish do not seem to think it worth while to come to the surface at all, the flies they find there probably not being sufficient in size and number to tempt them up. When these large flies, however, are rising, the fish follow them up to the surface, and are kept there by the plenty they find there. At other times, such is the abundance and choice of food in the depths of the lakes that they can fill their bellies with very little trouble, and without the necessity for leaving the bottom. Thus they grow fat, lazy, and large. As an instance of this, I will quote a fact mentioned by Colonel Whyte some time ago in the *Field*. The colonel stated that he had a small lake which formerly held a quantity of nice fish. They were not very large, but very free in rising, and he could take a good number of them almost whenever he chose to go a-fishing. Wishing to try whether the introduction of fresh food would improve their size and condition, he turned into the lake a good quantity of the small freshwater snails and other small molluscs which are found in many waters, but hitherto had not been present in this lake. These molluscs took well to the lake, and multiplied rapidly. As they did so, the fish increased in size and improved wonderfully in condition, becoming from slim genteel trout perfect miniature pigs with fine pink flesh ; but mark the consequence—as they improved in size and condition, they gradually left off rising to flies, so that where he was able formerly to bag his couple of dozen with the fly, he now finds it difficult even to bag one. Now, here is a hint as regards lakes, which proprietors might act on if they choose, for other species of food might be thus introduced besides molluscs, and without spoiling the rising of the fish. But as I have dealt with all this elsewhere, I only refer to it here to point out that when the fish are thus shy it is because they find too much food at the bottom to trouble their heads with what goes on at the surface. In the moderate lakes this is only partially the case, and there is yet some species of fly or insect perhaps of sufficient size and attraction to tempt them to the surface occasionally. What it may be of course has all to be discovered. So far these matters are almost a closed book to us.

Now, if the trout are too much engaged on the bottom to come or even look at the top, manifestly the only chance the angler has is to seek them on their own terms at the bottom, and he must either fish with a float and worm or minnow, as recommended by Stoddart, or I recommend him to try the plan which I have already mentioned for deep still holes and mill heads, where the trout are equally indisposed to come to the surface ; he must select a tolerably large fly (the choice must be left to his own judgment), bite a good-sized split shot on the gut just above the head of the fly, where it will look like a natural head and neck, then cast his line, and let it sink as near to the bottom as he can judge, without hanging in the weeds, etc., and then draw it towards him, and upwards, by short pulls and jerks, and he will probably get a tremendous pull for his pains, when he will do his best to pull too. A single gentle, or maggot, or caddis added to his lure by sticking one on the bend of the hook, will increase its temptations ; or if he likes to abjure a body and have nothing but hackle and wings, and to put two gentles on in place of it, he will probably get some good fish if he perseveres with his "sinking and drawing." Of course, if he makes half a dozen or a dozen casts, and then gets tired of it, throws it up, and says, "It is of no use," it *will* be of no use. It must be tried fairly ; for big trout, even in sulky lakes, are not to be found over every yard of the bottom, and still less disposed to feed at any or every hour of the day. In many sulky lakes the trout only rise well after dark, when admirable sport may often be had.

ON DIBBING OR DAPING

Fishing with the natural fly, or, as it is termed, dibbing or daping, ranks next to fishing with the artificial fly. It is a much simpler process, but requires a great deal of nicety. The easiest style in which to use the natural fly is with the blow-line, but the blow-line is hardly fair fly-fishing; indeed, dibbing, more especially with the May fly, is so destructive when worked by an adept, that it is more then a question whether it should be held fair fishing at all. However, as many clubs and good anglers do follow and profess it, and as in many lakes it yields almost the only sport got from them, I will e'en treat of it.

The blow-line is thus employed. The line is composed of the lightest, loosest, and airiest floss silk—so web-like that the least puff of wind will drive it before it. Light and loose as it is, it has abundant strength. The rod used generally resembles the mast of a fishing-smack, being of the lightest cane, but as long as it can be obtained or worked. It generally runs to nineteen or twenty feet, and often beyond that. As a foot-line or cast, there is some two feet or more of very fine gut, and a hook to match. On this hook is impaled a live May fly. Put the hook into the thorax about the throat, and bring it out again just below the wings. Some anglers use two flies, and two hooks are then employed, tied, not back to back, but side to side, and then opened wide enough to get the two flies on comfortably; I do not commend the plan as it makes too bulky a bait. The angler then chooses that bank of the stream whence the wind is blowing, and walks up the bank; when he sees a good fish rise, he turns his back to the wind, faces the fish, lets out line enough just to clear the ground—holds the rod perfectly upright, and allows the wind to take the line out over the river, which, if but a very moderate breeze is on, it will do easily. When it is bellied out half-way or three-parts across the stream, judging his distance carefully, the angler slowly lowers the point of the rod, so that if he has measured his distance pretty rightly the fly will light where or whereabouts the fish is rising, and a little above it of course, and as the fly can be lowered on to the water *au naturel* like thistledown, and by the skilful working of the rod-point can be made even to skip and flutter up and down on the surface like the natural insect in the enjoyment of the most rabid and demonstrative liberty, and as no line need be visible, and nothing need touch the water but the fly, *if* a fish be taking (as most fish are when the May fly is on) and the angler be anything but a bungler, a rise should be almost a certainty. When a fish rises at a fly give him time enough to get the fly into his mouth before you strike ; as the May fly is a largish fly, the trout will possibly not take the entire fly quite in his mouth at the first gulp, but sucks it in slowly, and a strike then may eventuate in the hook coming away without the fly, and a scared fish. I have often known this to be the case, and were it not for the misses the fish would have a bad chance against the blow-line ; but a miss or two of this kind soon renders them wide-awake, and I have seen a blow-line worked over a mile of stream where lots of fine fish were rising at the May fly without hooking a fish. Of course the angler must do his best to keep out of sight of the sharp-eyed fish, or even the best-worked blow-line will fail in its effect, and as the length of rod and line employed is rather limited, this is not always easy. In fishing a lake the boat is allowed to drift with the wind, and the rises are fished in much the same way as in a river.

By far the more skilful, and the more difficult plan of using the live fly, however, is to employ only the ordinary fly-rod, and with about three yards of the very finest gut, and a fine wire, No. 7 straight bend, short-shanked hook, to cast the fly as though it were but an imitation. In the action of casting a good deal of care and practice are required, or the fly will whip off to a certainty. Then in guiding the fly down over the stream, it is necessary not to check it, or it immediately becomes entirely immersed ; and after this has happened two or three times the wings will most likely become wet and the fly will be useless.

Having baited the hook as in blow-line fishing, let out rather more line than the length of the rod (the angler will soon find out how much he can manage), take the line about six or eight inches above the hook between the finger and thumb of the left hand, wave the rod and the bagged line backwards and forwards once or twice to get the spring, and, if possible, to wait for a slight air or puff of wind (it is needless to say that it is very desirable to get the wind in your favour in this kind of fishing), then, as you intend to cast, raise both hands before you as though casting the fly with both hands, as it were, towards its destination ; at the proper moment, when the impulse is given (and this exact moment nothing but experience will tell) let go of the line and cast softly, and without jerk or violence of any kind, towards the point aimed at (say a yard above a rising fish), and if the cast be deftly made the fly will fall like nature itself on the surface, and the light fine gut will also be extended upon it. No motion of drawing towards the rod or angler must be made, or the line will make " centipedes " on the water, and the fly be drowned. The stream must bear it along the surface without check or motion, the angler following the fly down with the point of the rod and a loose line. When a fish rises give him time to turn his head, and then strike firmly but not heavily, and get on terms with your fish as soon as you can. When the swim is over you can pull out and cast again, and be sure and get the fly off the water as expeditiously as possible, but without violence—of course there is no necessity to take the line 'twixt finger and thumb again. Cast as in artificial fly-fishing, but with less force and abruptness, and cause the line to describe more of a circle behind you, as the slightest " flick " or " crack " will necessitate putting on a new fly. At every cast you may let out a foot or two of line, until you get out as much as you can cast. I have seen anglers who could cast near a dozen yards of line with a live fly at the end, with the slightest air or wind behind them. A long, light, and especially a pliable rod (more particularly at the top) is required for this kind of fishing ; and though it is very deadly, it is not equal, of course, to the blow-line, while it affords as much sport as, and requires more skill than, casting with the artificial fly ; but it has its drawbacks. It is " finicking," fidgetty work. The constant renewing of the flies, and the great care required in casting, the necessity for avoiding carefully every leaf and twig, make it a troublesome business at the best, though it is almost always in suitable weather, when practised by an adept, productive of a good basket. In May fly fishing, of course, one of the requisites is a good supply of fine fresh green May flies—the greener or yellower the better. Eschew as much as possible the black and shiny transformation, as the fish greatly prefer the freshly-hatched insect ; these it is most desirable to have caught on the morning of fishing *if possible.* They should be kept in a small basket made for the purpose, and sold at many tackle-makers' ; this is semicircular in form, like a soldier's canteen, in fact, and has a lid and an aperture whence the flies can be taken as they are required. The basket is strapped to the waist by a leathern strap, and thus can be arranged wherever it may be found most convenient to the hand.

There are many other natural flies and insects that can be used in daping, as the stone fly, the alder fly, the bluebottle, the daddy longlegs, the coch-y-bondu, the cinnamon, etc., in fact, almost any fly that is large enough to be stuck upon a hook will answer the purpose. For the smaller flies it is customary to use a smaller hook, and to put two flies upon it ; but with such flies it is more customary to use a longish rod, and to dib in over bushes or from behind some sheltering tree, or any other cover where the angler can conceal himself. Here, haply, where overhanging branches cast a shadow on the water in the hottest weather, the big fellows lie close in to the bank under which

> . . . . beneath the tangled roots
> Of pendent trees, the monarch of the brook

has his abiding-place : you see him, as it were, standing at his front door in the receipt of custom, and rising gently at every fly, grub, or insect-security that may pass him. It is your business, oh angler ! to take in this greedy discounter of insect acceptances.

> Behoves you then to ply your finest art.

Prospect the place, look for an open space through the boughs and foliage, just over some good fish. You must approach the spot with great caution, poking your rod with the line wound round it before you ; now you are opposite to the spot, and concealed from the fish by an intervening bush. Upon a No. 8 hook of fine wire stick your two flies ; if you have not flies, why a couple of gentles, a grasshopper, a humblebee, or a beetle, perhaps, or any other insect will haply serve you. A couple of yards will be as much line as you require ; wind it loosely round your rod-point, the baited hook hanging down close to the rod ; now, cautiously and gradually, and with as little motion or disturbance as possible, poke the point of the rod through the hole in the foliage, and begin turning the rod round to let the line unwind ; presently it is all out, and the bait hangs free outside of the bushes ; *being sure that you are over the right spot,* gently drop the bait on the surface ; there is a slight dimple in the water below, a sound in the dead stillness, as if a drop of water had fallen into a well, followed by a considerable splashing and a rush under the bank if you do not prevent it, and you must play and get your fish out in the best way you can. If he is a very good one, your chance to lose him is considerable. Daping is in some places called "shade-fishing." It is as great a stretch of a permission for a day's *fly*-fishing as any *gentleman* could be guilty of—more this deponent sayeth not. It would be thought that where worm-fishing is prohibited, every other species of bait-fishing would be also prohibited, yet is this not the case, for on many waters dibbing with the natural fly—which is, perhaps, the most deadly style of fishing of any in experienced hands—is permitted, while minnow and worm are excluded, and even called poaching. I have noticed that the piscatorial mind has a strange way of looking upon the word poaching. With many people " poaching " means fishing in any other way than that favoured by the appellant. It, in fact, as Hudibras has it,

> Compounds for sins they are inclined to,
> By damning those they have no mind to.

Had I my will I would never allow a trout to be caught with anything but the artificial fly, and should, under such circumstances, look upon all bait-fishing as poaching, no matter how employed. But as men are constituted, each has his favourite mode of fishing, and all must be served. The only things I resolutely bar and will not hold admissible under any circumstances are salmon roe and wasp-grub. The first because it is illegal and destructive of the salmon (for to bait your hook with three or four salmon to catch one trout is very bad economy) ; while the second spoils the sport of others, for where wasp-grub has been used to any extent, sport ceases. In all other respects, if worm, minnow, and natural fly are allowed, what should be prohibited ? It is the common practice in many places to fish gentles for trout, precisely as though you were fishing for roach, using a fine quill float, and throwing in a few gentles from time to time ; but I never could abide fishing for trout with a float—it is an insult to the prince of bold-biting fish—still it is practised in the quiet eddies and holes with great effect, too, and Mr. Stoddart, who is a great authority upon worm-fishing, as I have said, recommends the use of a float on small lakes and pools. With respect to what methods of fishing are fair and what not, the most satisfactory and safe plan to go on would appear to be guided by the custom ; if a person confines himself to the custom of the place he cannot be far wrong. But if he is told that he is to confine himself to any special kind of fishing—for instance, if he has a day's fishing granted to him on condition that it is fair fly-fishing—and he " just slips on a worm because they don't rise very well," then he is not only a poacher but an unmitigated " cad," who ought to be kicked off the premises.

ON CRAB OR CREEPER-FISHING

Here, again, is a method of bait-fishing very widely indulged in, which is really very deadly in skilful hands, and which might be held poaching if any bait-fishing is, nevertheless it is not. The crab or creeper is the larva of the stone fly, and may be found running about amongst the stones on the wet strands of rivers where the stone fly is plentiful, during the month of April and on through much of May, according to the season, a week or two sooner or later. In appearance it resembles strongly a black insect which we used to call in my early youth the "Devil's coach horses," an insect which perhaps will be recognised by its habit of erecting its tail, or the latter half of its body, in the air, when disturbed. I believe its proper name is the rose beetle. Like to it is the creeper, save that it has horns or feelers on the head, and somewhat similar appendages to the tail. It is not a prepossessing looking insect. It is very active, and not so very easy to catch. However, the laddies by the river-side will always collect the angler a good stock of them for a consideration if they are to be obtained.

The method of using the creeper very much resembles that used in lob worm fishing in the larger brooks and rivers, but with this remarkable difference, that whereas the lob worm is most deadly when the water is coloured slightly, the creeper is most deadly when it is low and bright. The later the creeper can be fished in the season the better the chance is with trout. The method of using it is as follows: The gut should, of course, be of the finest, some two or three yards; the hook a straight-bend No. 7, with a longish shank. Some people prefer two smaller hooks, one above the other, the lower hook hooked crosswise through the tail, and the upper through the thorax; and doubtless with a tender bait like this, this plan is worth consideration. I generally, however, when I have used it, employed but one hook, as above; but to prevent the fly slipping down to the bend of the hook, I lash into the shank of the hook a short bristle, leaving about a quarter of an inch of it pointing out and upwards towards the gut, and this prevents the bait from slipping down, while it forms no resistance whatever to baiting. Choose the creeper with the most yellow about it (as we believe do the trout) for preference. This, I fancy, is the female, and trout favour the feminine gender with more flies than the stone fly. Take the hook and insert the point at the top of the thorax, threading the bait upon the hook, as it were, until the point comes out about the middle of the belly, and the insect hangs pretty straight upon the hook, the shank buried in the body, and but the point visible. Great care is required in casting, as the bait is very tender, and therefore the line should not greatly exceed the length of the rod, unless the angler be very skilful. No shot is necessary unless the water be heavy. In ordinary streams it will sink to mid-water easily enough, where it will for the most part be taken. If the water be heavy, however, a single large shot will do. Bite it on a foot above the hook. It is almost impossible to fish creepers properly without wading. Enter the stream, stooping cautiously if the water happen to be very open and thin, and cast upwards and outwards, letting the bait come down almost level with the place where you stand, lifting the bait by raising the point of the rod slightly now and then, if you have reason to suppose that it is getting near the bottom, taking a careful step, or even two, upwards, at every cast or so. Try the edges of streams just out of the rough water, the turn of an eddy, the eye of the stream, and where it commences to turn off under overhanging banks or trees with a fair stream under them, the tails of rough pools—anywhere where good fish may be on the watch, save still water, where it is next to useless to try it. The eye should detect the bite before the hand does. If you wait for the hand to denote to you the " jog, jog " a good trout gives when he takes a bait, ten to one you will be too late. As the bait never does, or *never ought to*, touch the bottom (as, being so tender, it is very soon destroyed), the instant the line checks as it comes down-stream towards you don't wait to wonder what it may be, but strike. The loss or damage of your bait is certain in either case, whether you have a bait and miss it, or whether you take hold of a stick, weed, or stone, so you may as well strike and chance it. Do not strike too hard. Strike quickly, lightly, and firmly ; and as the best fish come at the creeper, get them down to you as soon as possible, and with as little ado, so as not to disturb the others above. The greatest nuisance of this fishing is that you are so perpetually called upon to renew your bait, for every run, every stroke, and every hitch destroys it. Perhaps the most deadly time of any to use the creeper is about the period when the chief transition from creeper to fly is going on ; and he is a muff who with a fair chance in his favour cannot fill a basket with good trout then.

A tiny fly-box, of funnel shape, with a small exit, is the best thing to keep them in ; and there are few tackle shops but sell such boxes. The creeper may be kept either in water or without. If you wish to keep a number of them, probably a large box with perforated zinc top, and a layer of large pebbles at the bottom, only half submerged in water, so that the insects may suit their own convenience, would be preferable. For a day's fishing, they may be carried in a dry box.

BEETLE-FISHING

Various beetles, both land and water, may be used in precisely the same way as the creeper. Anglers do not, as a rule, pay half enough attention to the various species of Coleoptera on which the trout feed. Yet the importance of this kind of food, not only to trout but to many other sorts of fish, may be seen by cutting open a trout when they are perhaps rising badly, when a large proportion of the contents of the fish's stomach will be found to be beetles ; and a good basket may often be made either with the natural or artificial beetle when the fish are not rising to the fly. In mentioning the real beetle, of course its use would be confined only to those waters where bait-fishing is legitimate. The best land-beetles to use are the coch-y-bondu, Marlow buzz, or fern-webb, of which I have already spoken. It may be found plentifully in many places in June and July. Similar to it is the cowdung-beetle, found under cowdung of some days' standing ; but there are many others which may be used on an emergency, and which will be found to kill well. Water-beetles are very numerous, and will, of course, also be found valuable aids to the fisherman. The method of using them is similar to that described in creeper-fishing. The artificial beetle will be found very useful at times, and I recommend it as much the pleasantest way of fishing beetle ; and as much skill and quickness, and perhaps even more, will be required than is necessary in the manipulation of the artificial fly, because the angler will not have the advantage of seeing a rise, but will have to judge from his sense of feeling and the motion of the line. If the line stops suddenly he should strike at once, not waiting for the tug at the rod-top ; but in all cases he should strike lightly, or he may destroy his bait even if there should be no bite. The artificial beetle should be made by tying three strands of gut, stained almost black, firmly crosswise to the hook shank. Then tie a bunch of some long strands of any brown or mottled feather which will best imitate the wing cases, on at the tail of the hook. Next tie on peacock or ostrich herl at the same place, and wind the silk up to the bend; in doing so two strips of lead may be bound on to the shank to give it weight. Then wind on the herl for the body, and tie it off neatly; bring the brown strands up to the bend tightly, to form the back, and tie it off; then tie a bit of silk tightly round over all to separate the body and form the thorax. Cuts of two artificial beetles may be seen at Plate X, Figs. 5 and 6, page 219.

ON WORM-FISHING

There are two methods of worm-fishing—one which I am excessively partial to, and one which I care nothing about. The first and simplest is the *dolce far niente* of trout fishing; and I know nothing more pleasant than wandering dreamily away up amongst the hills by the side of some tiny beck, new to the angler, with no sound but the plover, or the curlew, or the distant tinkle of the drowsy bell-wether; no encumbrance but a light rod; no bother about what flies will or will not suit; no tackle beyond a yard of gut and two or three hooks in a piece of brown paper; a small bag of moss with well-scoured worms within; a sandwich or a cold mutton chop—the latter for preference—in one pocket, and a flask of the dew " that shines in the starlight when kings dinna ken " in the other. Far, far beyond all care; away from rates, taxes, and telegrams; where there are neither division lists, nor law lists, nor stock lists, nor share lists, nor price lists, nor betting lists, nor any list whatever; where no newspaper can come to worry or unsettle you, and where you don't care a straw how the world wags; where your clients are trouts, your patients worms, your congregation mountain black-faces, water-ousels, and dabchicks; your court, hospital, or church the pre-Adamite hills with the eternal sky above them; your inspiration the pure breeze of heaven, far, far above all earthly corruption. Here, in delightful solitude, sauntering or scrambling on, and on, and on, and on, upwards and upwards, from wee poolie to fern-clad cascade; casting or dropping the worm into either, or guiding it deftly under each hollow bank and past each rugged stone, pulling out a trout here and a trout there in the fair summer weather, with now a whiff of wild thyme or fragrant gorse, and now a shaugh of the pipe, and an amazed and charmed gaze at the mountain crags above, and the ever-changing scenery of the hills as the clouds flit over them, with just sport enough to give amusement without enchaining the attention so much as to prevent us drinking in all the delights that nature spreads for us—this, this is to my mind the true delight of angling. This was my first experience, my first angling love, and will be my last. What though you never get a fish over half a pound? Why, *the* half-pounder is as much the hero of your day as the two-pounder is of your more pretentious friend, who spent the day up to his middle in the main river, and never noticed a thing all day but blue duns and fluttering willow-flies. And you do not indulge in such a ramble for the sake of showing your fish against all comers, but for solitude and self-communion among scenes that tell no lies and brook none.

There is not much to learn, apparently, in this kind of fishing, and yet it is astonishing what queer and unlikely places an adept will pull the little speckled fellows out of, which a tyro would deem hopeless. A hook of Nos. 5, 6, or 7, or of the straight round Carlisle bend, is all that you need, with some four feet of moderately fine gut; no shot or sinkers—the gravity of the worm itself is sufficient. Any kind of worms do, but the toughest are the best; and very small dew or lob worms answer the purpose, if you can get enough of them, better than others. Put the hook in *at the head* (not, as some prefer it, at the side); string the worm on down till there is but half an inch of tail left beyond the point. Now you are ready. Yonder is a small cascade some two feet in width; drop the worm into it, and let the stream take it where it will. Soh! No sooner is it clear of the down draught, and near the edge of the little basin, than there is a "pluck, pluck" at the line. Drop the point of the rod for a brief second to let him get the worm in his mouth; then give a short sharp stroke, and a lift of the rod-point, and you pull the little rascal out flopping on the bank, a noble quarter-of-a-pounder. Never mind; on with another worm and try again. Let it run close under that bank. "Dab!" your line goes under it with a shoot. Ah! you did not drop the point quick enough; he felt the check, and has left it. Don't worry him—leave him, and he may take in a few minutes, but not if you show him the worm too often. Now try by the side of that stone, and steer nicely through that little channel, cut between the rocks.

See, the line stops again; lift it gently, 'tis but a stick or a piece of weed. Now it stops once more, and by the tremulous motion of the line it is a fish—pull him out; "and so on." The great object in this kind of fishing is to let the worm roll along naturally, and to steer the line clear of all obstacles, so that no check may occur while working the worm through and round every likely hole, stone, or hanging bank. You never need try even the likeliest looking place more than twice, for usually the bait will be taken even at the first swim, if it is taken at all. Of course the angler must make himself as invisible as he can; and when an open or clear shallow bit occurs, he must cast up-stream and fish it down towards himself if he wants to catch fish in it. When the angler has a bite, he must drop the point of the rod for a second or two, and then strike; and when he strikes, if the fish do not prove too heavy, he must lift him out smartly with the point of the rod and drop him upon the bank. In this manner of fishing in some of the little becks in Cornwall when a boy I have pulled out five and six dozen of bright little trout in a day's fishing, not one of which would perhaps reach half a pound. The angler can, of course, if he likes, use Mr. Stewart's tackle, when he can strike at the slightest touch without waiting, but as there are three hooks, although he will perhaps catch more fish, he will much more often experience the annoyance of being hung up in the thousand and one obstructions that abound in such becks. Added to this, he does not want to skin the stream, but to have a pleasant fishing ramble and to leave some fish for another day.

In larger brooks or in rivers, worm-fishing becomes altogether a different affair. It is more often adopted when the rain has swelled and thickened the streams than at any other times. Many of the best worm-fishers, however, follow it with great success when the water is low and clear. To succeed well, however, at such times, it is necessary to fish with very fine tackle, and to use the best precautions not to be seen by the fish. When the water is thick this is needless. In electing to fish worm in thick water, always choose the day when the water is first rising and thickening if possible, as that is the time when all the fish in the river will be abroad and on the watch for food. If you put off going out till the next day you *may* find them gorged with the food the flood has brought down, and on the next day, if the flood holds, you will be sure to, and your chance is even worse still, and you must give them a day or two to recover from their surfeit before they will take well. At such times, however, the in-shore eddies and thin water close to the banks will always give a few fish to the fly or the minnow.

The length of your rod for worm-fishing must always depend somewhat upon the size of the river and nature of the water you are going to fish. It should not be less than from thirteen to fourteen feet long, and may be as much longer as you can conveniently handle. It should be of the lightest cane, moderately stiff, but not too stiff, with some extra play in the top-joint, as you often have to cast worm like a fly; and you will find it of some advantage to have a good-sized ring at the top of the rod, and to see that your sinkers or leads, if you use them, are so arranged that they will pass freely through the top rings. Many a line and hook have I saved from destruction by just drawing the line through the rings when I got hung up in a bit of stick, stone, or a snag, until by thrusting the rod point down under water till the top ring reached the hook, I managed to clear it. There is nothing so annoying as to break your line and to have to sit down and rig up a fresh one, when the fish are well on the feed. Every moment lost is a fish lost. A little care and attention at the outset will obviate all this. The line should be light, and of fine dressed eight-plait silk (dressed twist will do almost as well); the gut cast suited to the water. In thick water it may be tolerably stout. The weights should be small rolled pieces of thin sheet lead, such as roll-plummets are made of, as these can be taken off, and put on, and reduced with an ease which split shot does not permit of; added to this, they do not bruise the line like split shot, nor do they take such hold of obstructions on the bottom. The tackle to be used may be either the single hook before mentioned, or a size or so larger, on which a well-scoured, good-sized dew worm, or two brandlings, etc., may be impaled; or three small single fly-hooks, tied at short intervals on the gut, and pointing in opposite directions, may be employed. This tackle which I have already once or twice referred to, previously, is a very successful one indeed, and is used a good deal in the North and on the Border. It is called Stewart's tackle, because Mr. Stewart is supposed to have invented it, or, at any rate, to have introduced it to the public. When the fish are coming shyly at the worm, this tackle will kill three fish for one taken by the single hook, and its superiority becomes most clear and manifest.

To bait a single hook with two brandlings, put the point of the hook in at the head of the worm, and bring it out about the middle; pull the barb through, and draw the worm up the shank of the hook out of the way; * then take the second worm, put the point into the middle of the worm, and thread it on the hook up towards the head, leaving about half an inch of head beyond the point of the hook; draw down the first worm until it meets the second, and the hook is baited.

To fish, however, with small worms, as brandlings or red worms, requires a neat touch and a light hand, as the slightest snap from a trout, such as none but a very practised worm-fisher would detect, is sufficient to tear and spoil the worm; and the young hand had better graduate at tough dew-worms until he acquires skill.

To bait Stewart's tackle, take a worm (or even two if needed), and stick the small hooks through it in various places, taking a turn of the worm round the gut between each hook, as shown in Plate IX, Figs. 2 and 3, page 211.

When the big hook is used, the trout often takes the bend or only the shank in its mouth, and either feels the steel within or the drag upon the worm, and quickly rejects it, and as the point is not in his mouth, a strike merely alarms him without hooking him; but it is next to impossible for a fish to take any part of the worm in his mouth with Stewart's tackle without having one or two of the hooks in his mouth.

In worm-fishing, it is often indispensable to wade. Indeed, in nine times out of ten, particularly in fine water fishing, the angler will have to wade more or less. In thick water he may avoid this somewhat. He must, of course, wade up-stream, casting into every likely spot as far as he can above him, allowing the bait to roll down-stream until it travels down level with him. The side of a big stone or rock, the edge of sharp streams, narrow runs between weeds or stones, the gravelly tails of pools or just before a rapid, under bridges or by bridge piers, by over-hanging banks, and at times even in deep holes, are all places to be fished carefully. In what I have called "the eye" of a stream (i.e. the first eddy off the commencement of a rapid or stream on the side towards which the stream bends), the experienced worm-fisher will always look for a bite, if he has one in the stream at all, as here the trout always

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* In baiting a worm, a small bag of sand to dip the worm into will greatly facilitate the operation by enabling the thumb and finger to take a firm hold.—F. F.

lie watching for the first chance of the food that comes down. If the young angler will note carefully, he will see that small sticks, straws, flies, and whatever may come down, usually take a turn round this eddy before they are swept downstream. As the rapid narrows where it makes its shoot, all food is brought together in a small compass, and is also swept into this eye, where the best trout lie expecting it.

In casting a worm, it is advisable to commence with a line no longer than the rod, and this may be increased while throwing in the usual way. In bringing out the line behind over the shoulder, the return must not be made so abruptly as it is with the fly, or the worm will speedily be whipped off or torn, but while bringing the rod to the forward motion a much wider and rounder sweep must be made. The line must be perfectly extended, with the worm at the extreme end of it, and, if I may so express it, " at rest," before the return is made. The worm will consequently fall so low that it touches the surface of the water before it is again impelled forward, and, if a good worm-fisher is watched when at work, this will be seen constantly to take place. To get into the regular swing, to do it neatly, and to cast accurately, require a good deal of practice ; and an expert worm-fisher can cast a good long line with a worm at the end neatly and effectively. If the water be coloured, a line a trifle longer than the rod is sufficient, and the underhand lift or throw will answer all purposes ; but clear water requires a longer line and more careful manipulation.

In fishing with the worm, more particularly with the single hook, when you are not mid-water fishing but are letting the bait ground, you should always cast so far up-stream as to permit the worm to reach the bottom just above the point where you expect fish, so that it may come trundling along over the favourite feeding-ground like the natural and free bait. In this style of fishing, when the worm enters the water, sink the point of the rod towards the surface, to allow it freely to find the bottom ; but when you have reason to believe that it has reached it, or nearly so, gradually raise the point as the line comes home towards you ; but you are to remark that this must only be done so as to draw up the slack line, not pulling upon the worm in any way. Indeed, the progress of the worm should neither be hastened nor retarded in the least by any act of the angler's, but it should be allowed to come down as if it had neither line nor hook attached to it.

When the line stops in its downward career, an experienced angler can for the most part tell at once whether the stoppage is caused by the bite of a fish, or whether the sinkers or worm have lodged in a weed, stick, or stone. There is an abruptness, a tremulous motion, sometimes a slight movement of the line, which tells the angler at once, without any "tug, tug," or feel by the hand, that it is a fish. When you see this, drop the point of the rod for a second or two, as if the fish feels any restraint on the worm, he will, unless very hungry indeed, at once reject it, and you will certainly lose your fish. Having given a second or two, strike firmly, play boldly, and land as soon as possible.

This is what you must do if you are fishing with the large single hook. If you are fishing, however, with Mr. Stewart's tackle, you need give no time, as this is used for the most part with light sinkers in mid-water, or at any rate clear of the bottom, and the instant the line stops you strike. This is a great advantage over the old plan, in which when the line stopped, if you were not certain that it was a fish, you either had to "feel" him or to strike at once.

Feeling the fish is dangerous work. It consists in raising the point of the rod so as to tighten the line sufficiently to enable you to feel the "tug, tug, tug" made by the fish in detaining the worm; but this, as I have said, is not safe, being merely the herald of a rejection of the worm, and when you strike you find the fish has left you. If, on the other hand, you strike at once on suspicion, one or two things may happen, viz. either the fish will not have got the large hook sufficiently into his mouth, or, failing in its being a fish at all, you will take such fast hold of root, stick, or stone, that the greatest difficulty in dislodging the hold without a breakage will ensue.

Although worm-fishing is not very clean and delicate when compared with artificial fly-fishing, it requires no little skill, and the fish has many more chances in his favour, particularly when the single hook is used, than the angler who is unacquainted with it would be disposed to imagine, for the moderately skilful angler will certainly not kill one fish for every two bites which he gets, and often not for every three, even when the fish are inclined to take worm, which is not every day; while the unskilful angler will feel tug after tug, and, unless the fish are savagely hungry, will not kill one in six. I am of course speaking of localities where the trout are accustomed to be fished for with a worm, not in unsophisticated preserves where we may say of a worm—

> Oh, no! we never mention it.
> Its name is never heard;

and the majority, certainly, of south-country fishermen will be disposed to add, "and a good job too." Still there are districts where its use is universal, and where to stop its use would be to stop the sport of hundreds, and to interdict fishing for at least one half of the fishing days in the season.

CHAPTER VIII

SPINNING FOR TROUT

Spinning for Large Trout—Spinning for Trout in Small Streams—The Par-Tail—The Grayling

I NOW come to spinning for trout. The very best spinners for large trout in the world are Thames fishermen. It is a sight worth seeing to watch a well-practised hand standing on a weir beam, and working his bait in every eddy, behind piles, and under the apron or sheathing; now sending it far away down the stream by a light swing of the arm, now pitching it dexterously under the broken water of the fall, and skimming along from bay to bay, so that not one inch of likely water remains unfished; all the while gathering the line up in the palm of his left hand and giving it out thence, so that no slack hangs about anywhere.

The way of casting a spinning-bait Thames fashion has already been described in jack-fishing, and need not be repeated here, as the *modus operandi* is the same for trout as for pike. The rod should be a little longer than that used for jack-fishing, but not so stout. Thames trout-rods are usually of bamboo, the favourite length from fourteen to fifteen feet. The line is of well-dressed fine eight-plait silk. The commonest kind of tackle in use among the Thames trout-fishers precisely resembles that used for jack-fishing, shown in Plate IV, Fig. 1, p. 76. It is very seldom indeed that more than three triangles and a lip-hook are used, and, of course, the flight of hooks is tied upon gut, and not gimp; and, being intended to take a smaller bait, the hooks are smaller and tied on closer together. Some people occasionally use a reverse hook to secure the bend next to the last triangle, but, though useful, it is not indispensable. Some, again, use a single hook at the tail. This hook, being a size or two larger, is hooked into the tail, so as to make the bend of the hook form the crook. I prefer this plan, as it strengthens the hold on the tail and makes the bait last longer. The great difficulty, however, which I have always experienced in fishing for Thames trout has been that the hooks are all so small that they take a bad hold on the bait and a worse one on the fish; and nine trout out of every ten get off after being hooked, solely because we have fished for a fish as large and powerful as a salmon, and often in water as rough and heavy as that which salmon are found in, but with roach hooks to hold him when hooked. Can anything be more absurd? The fish runs, is hooked, gives one turn over in the stream, or perhaps is hauled about for five minutes or more, and then off he goes, with a very strong reminder that a bait which conducts itself in the fashion which a spinning-bait does is not safe feeding. I could almost venture to assert that there is not a trout of seven or eight pounds and upwards in the Thames but has been served in this way half a dozen times; and then we marvel that Thames trout should be such shy fish and so difficult to catch, whereas the only wonder is that they ever run at a spinning bait at all, so "well educated" as they are. It was, as I have said, to remedy this that I invented my tackle, and subsequently improved upon it by borrowing Mr. Pennell's tail-hook. The only difference which I make between this tackle and that which I use for pike is, that I employ only one triangle of fair-sized hooks at the side of the bait above the big tail-hook instead of two, and this is attached to the lip-hook as in the minnow tackle, shown in Plate IX, Fig. 7, p. 211.* There are few tackles which hold the bait better together, which keep it in spinning order longer (owing to the big grip which the large hook takes on the tail of the bait), or which are so little conspicuous to the gaze of so shy a fish as the Thames trout; and, added to this, if the angler hooks his fish he may play him with vigour, as he ought to be played. These I hold to be qualities which are certainly desirable in a tackle where the fish are shy or the streams rough and heavy.

Some Thames fishers, who like ten or a dozen hooks to their tackles, may say that there are not enough hooks in this to give a sufficient chance of hooking these fish. To this I say, that, if the trout runs well and takes the bait fairly, there are quite enough hooks to bring him to basket; but, if he runs badly, I would rather not hook him at all, as a slight hold followed by a scramble and a lose will certainly be the result, and the trout is shy for weeks, if not for the season. This is what I complain of in those many but small-hooked tackles.

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* Instead of the plain single tail-hook shown in the engraving, one of Mr. Pennell's double reverse hooks should be used for large trout; or the angler can, if he prefers it, use this tackle exactly as it is figured, by employing it and baiting it as prescribed for the pike at page 84. It is an admirable tackle either way.

The trace to be employed in spinning for the Thames trout should be as long as can be conveniently managed; and there should be from two to three feet of good round sound trout-gut at least below the lead, which should be a "Field" lead or one on a similar principle, to prevent kinking, with at least two swivels below the lead, If three are used, they should be doubled or joined, as recommended by Mr. Pennell; this gives great play to the bait. A large swivel at the head of the trace, to connect the running-line, is all that is needed above the lead if it be on the "Field" principle, as all the spinning takes place below it. The trace above the lead should consist of one strand of stouter single gut, one of double twisted, and two of treble twisted. This makes up a very useful trace.

In spinning for these large trout, the brighter and more attractive the bait is the better. A small dace or a small bleak I always prefer to any other bait, as a gudgeon or loach. It is desirable that they should spin evenly and well, if only to prevent the quick-eyed trout from seeing the hooks about the bait. All that I have said about putting a bait on jack tackle will apply equally to trout; the same rules must be observed if the bait be required to spin well.

In the early part of the season the trout will be found in the open streams; but as the season advances, and the nights get warm, and the water low and clear, they appear to draw more up to the weirs. Perhaps bait is more plentiful there at such times. Although it is the custom to fish for them with a neat little bait about three and a half inches long, yet I have known the best fish hooked with a large jack-bait and gimp-tackle after they had been fished over with the usual small baits for weeks in vain. Probably the larger bait tempted them; and, indeed, if the angler should see a Thames trout feeding, he will more often see him chasing a large bait than a small one.

Owing to their shyness of the spinning-bait, it has become greatly the practice of late years to fish for them with a live bait, sinking and drawing with but a couple of shot and a single hook, or a triangle hooked through the nose, and a long and light line out. It is a mighty killing plan if the fish be well on the feed, but is not so sportsmanlike a method as spinning. Some even go the length of fishing the weirs with a combination of paternoster and large float ; but this certainly savours more of hot-hunting than sportsmanship, so I say no more of it than that the practice does prevail.

The great art and mystery of Thames trout-fishing is unwearied perseverance. If the angler can make up his mind, when he has " spotted " a fish, to sit and spin over him for hours, and keep up his expectation of a run for every minute in the twenty-four, perhaps for a week or more, he may, if he has luck, get a fish in the course of a week or two ; but even then it is no certainty. His best chance is early in the morning, before the fish have been disturbed by boats and barges or by other anglers. More trout are killed when they come on the feed for the first time in the day than in all the twenty-four hours besides, because they have had a long rest, and are sure to be more sharp set and less suspicious.

In fishing a weir, I have often seen anglers standing upright on the beam fishing the edge of the apron almost at their feet, in the expectation of running a trout. If they would consider the fine statuesque relief against the clear sky behind, which they present to the wary and astonished eyes of the fish, by so exposing themselves to view, they would better understand why they do sit and stand for hours and hours on such places without getting a run. Is a Thames trout such a fool as to take a suspicious looking bait, with the angler staring down his throat in the most conspicuous place possible, and within five yards or less of him ? Why, a trumpery little half-pound trout, that has never tasted steel or seen a bunch of feathers in his life, would not stand that ; and how can anglers expect the shyest fish that swims to do so ? The proper plan is to take the punt up above the weir, to let it fall against the uprights and lie there ; then, by pushing the rod between the handles of the paddles and the rymers, to fish not only the white water close up to the apron, but *the apron itself*. Many a good trout is hooked upon the apron, where he rests (as good trout will) close to the fall, picking up quietly whatever comes down it that is edible ; but which good trout will inevitably dash off the apron into the depths below the instant the angler sets his foot upon the weir beam. The angler should send the fisherman below the weir with the net. Let him get a spare boat, if it is required, and lie on the shore close up, while his master fishes the weir across, gently pushing the punt on from bay to bay, and never showing himself to the fish. If a fish is hooked the fisherman rows out and lands him, rebaits the hooks, and retires, while his master finishes the weir.

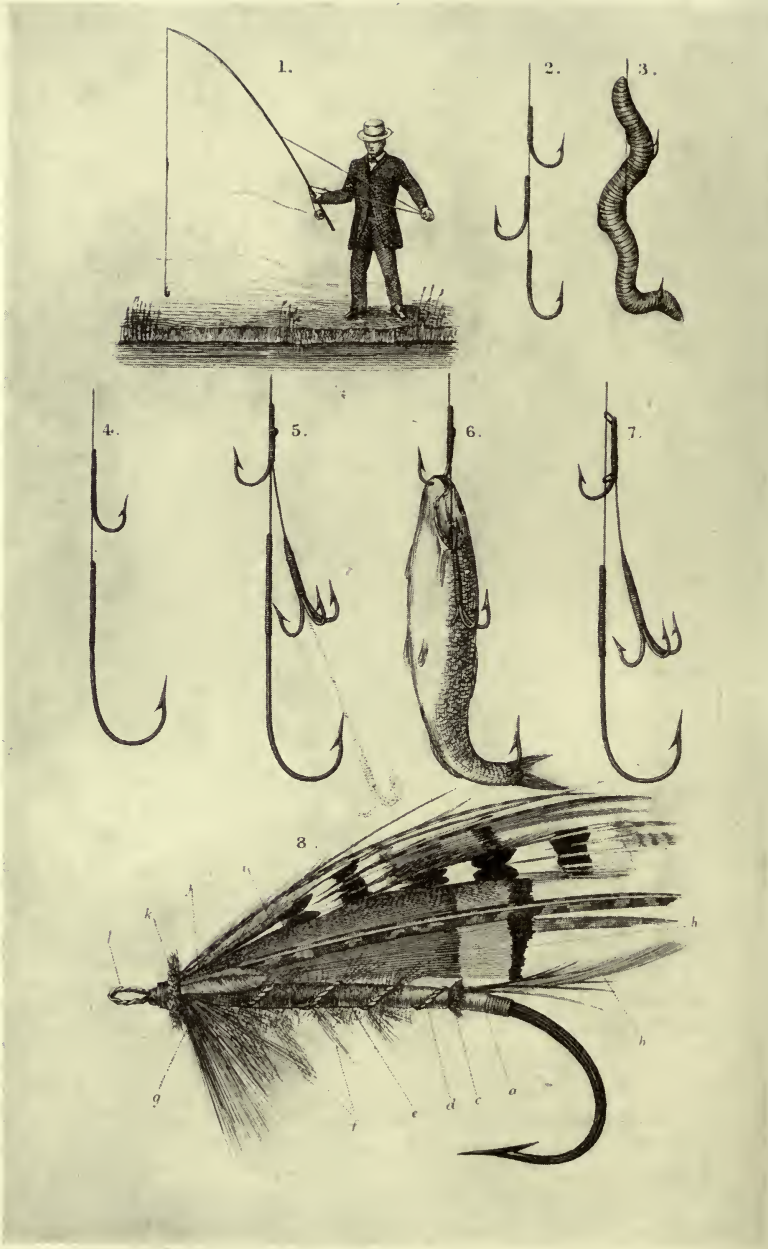
Unfortunately there is little chance for these precautions nowadays, for, whenever you go near a weir, you are sure to see one if not two fishermen perched, like Caryatides, at each corner, lazily staring out of countenance every fish that moves. And the worst of it is that they are always fishing, whether they have a customer or not. The consequence is that gentlemen are gradually, but surely, leaving the Thames trout-fishing altogether to the fishermen ; and the fishermen are beginning to experience the evil effects of their attempt "to eat their cake and have it too." Another practice common among Thames trout fishers, too, is to fish with very stout salmon gut, which is not only quite unnecessary, but greatly increases the chances against them.

So much for the Thames trout-fishing. I have, though formerly most patient and persevering, always found it a highly unsatisfactory pursuit. Of late years, however, many very good fish have been taken with the fly, and, as the Thames fishermen are not generally up to this, these have been chiefly, if not altogether, taken by gentlemen. The flies they affect are the stone fly, red palmer, May fly, alder and cinnamon, dressed large, or a fly with a silver twist body and a bunch of peacock herl for the wing, which they have a great fancy for ; but whether they mistake it for a fly or a minnow I do not pretend to say. Trout of seven and eight pounds weight have not unfrequently thus been taken ; and, if there was a larger stock of big flies, like the stone and May fly, in the river, so as to tempt the fish to look after that kind of food, it cannot be doubted that many more fish would thus be taken. I have heard of many good fish also being taken with grilse flies.

SPINNING FOR TROUT IN SMALL STREAMS

We now come to spinning for the smaller trout in lesser rivers and in brooks. The rod for this must be lighter than the Thames rod, so as to be wielded easily with one hand.

PLATE IX.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To face Page 211.

TACKLE FOR MINNOW SPINNING, ETC.

It must be also more slender, and with more play, as both bait and sinkers are of smaller size and lighter weight, and therefore require rather more spring to cast them easily. No better rod for minnow spinning can be made than the three-jointed bamboo rod, which I have described as a double hand fly rod, the top being made suitable to the requirements, and it does equally well as I have stated for worm-fishing. Some anglers, however, might fancy it over long, and they can shorten it if they please. A good many friends of mine took a strong fancy to it, and had patterns of it made.

But to go back to our tackle. The line should be of the *finest* dressed eight-plait, or even fine dressed Derby twist will answer, so that it may run as freely as possible. The spinning trace should be of fine gut below the lead, and of moderately fine above it; that is, if the angler uses a lead, as I advise him to, in order to avoid the twisting and kinking of his line, which will surely happen, to his annoyance, if he uses the common plan of biting three or four large shot on his trace. Indeed, save that the lead should be about half the weight, I recommend the same plan and pattern as that recommended for the Thames—a small "Field" lead, will prevent all kinking, and answers the purpose well. The bait should be about two and a half feet below the lead; as much gut as the angler chooses may be used above it. Two swivels should be used below the lead, and one to fasten the trace to the running line.

For the form of hooks to be employed, I recommend the set shown in the adjoining Plate IX, Fig. 5; the mode in which it is baited is shown at Fig. 6. This is something upon Colonel Hawker's principle, whose tackle, Mr. Pennell reminds us, was invented by Salter. I again record the fact, not that I think there is much to be proud of, as it is a very clumsy affair. The tackle I have given occurred to me from finding that the tackle shown in Plate IX, Fig. 4 (which is commonly used in the north), though simple enough, missed a great many runs. No doubt a great many anglers, having experienced the same thing before, may have used the same method to remedy this that I did. I never saw it previously, however, though I have since. This tackle gets rid of the double strand of gut in Hawker's and Salter's tackle, which I look on as exceedingly objectionable; indeed I would almost as soon have gimp tackle at once. It also disposes of the leaden cap, which is the worst substitute for sinkers and lip-hooks that could possibly be devised—deforming the minnow into a tadpole, pressing it down the gut by its weight until it can hardly help describing a semicircle, and serving to destroy the bait, which rather requires to be kept by a lip-hook in its place to give it proper spinning power. If a fish runs at the head he is missed for the want of a lip-hook, and if a flying triangle be wished for, in addition to the tackle I recommend, the dotted line in Fig. 5 shows how it may be obtained.

All these three tackles—that is, including Hawker's or Salter's—are baited in the same way. The bait generally is a minnow. The point of the large hook is put in at the mouth of the minnow, and is kept as close as possible to the spine until the minnow is worked on to the hook; the point is brought out at the tail. A sufficient crook is then left for the tail on the bend of the hook; and in the first and last patterns the lip-hook is slipped through the lip. In Fig. 5 the triangle is fixed at the shoulder, and the angler can try how he likes it on the reverse side to the big hook. If it does not allow the bait to spin well (as it does not sometimes), it can be easily shifted to the near side; if the bait spins well, however, it increases the chance of hooking a fish when he runs at the off side. The lip-hook never slides, because with a little humouring almost any reasonable minnow can be got on the hook and made to spin; but if the angler wants a sliding lip-hook, he has only to adopt the tackle at Fig. 7.

These are the best, and indeed the only *large hook* tackles worth notice. Some anglers, however, prefer two or three small triangles and a lip-hook on a reduced Thames scale; but there is no small hook tackle that can be named in the same day with the large ones for effectiveness. Some use small double hooks instead of triangles; two or three doubles, and a lip-hook. It is a matter of choice; I prefer the larger hook myself, as not being nearly so likely to lose the fish when hooked. If, however, triangle or double hook tackles be used, the rules given for Thames trouting or pike spinning with these tackles on a larger scale will equally apply. To make it spin well, however, a minnow should be bent rather more than a dace or gudgeon. If the reader will glance at the engraving of the baited tackle in Plate IX, Fig. 6, page 211, he will form a better idea of the method than any mere directions can afford him.

There is another tackle used by some anglers, sometimes called the bead or drop minnow. The tackle is made and is used much after the same system as that shown in Plate V, Fig. 7, page 78, as being employed by the Nottingham spinners. From the junction of the lip-hook depends a pear-shaped pellet of lead, secured to the tackle by a small ring. The tackle is not reeved through the gill as in the Nottingham plan, but the bead of lead is forced into the minnow's mouth, which is then closed by means of the lip-hook, the first triangle being hooked in just behind the back fin, so as to give the bait a bend, the second triangle hanging loose just beyond the tail. It is by no means a bad tackle for a small hooked pattern, but I do not like the plan of putting lead inside the minnow; baits thus treated very soon wear out and cut through at the gills and throat; the bait too, is rather apt to wobble in this method of baiting. This form of tackle is much commended by Mr. Pennell in his *Book of the Pike.*

Before using minnow tackle, the angler should always soak it well, as everything works and spins better after a soaking than when stiff and hard. All the swivels, too, should be looked to that they may work in the freest possible manner and without a hitch; and if any swivel does not work well, and cannot by oiling or greasing and working be got into good order, it is better to discard it and use another, as in practice it will be found useless.

The minnows may be carried in a small tin box, strapped to the left side, as in the natural May fly-fishing; and as at times there may be a good deal of wading, and the angler may have to bait while wading, which is an awkward job unless he walks out of the water to the bank, which is not always desirable, the angler should have buttoned to his hip a leather socket to fit the butt of his rod. You will find, brother angler, a wonderful comfort in this; for example, when landing your fish, put the butt in the socket, and hold your rod by the left hand; you then have perfect command over your fish without any strain on the arm, and you have your right hand perfectly free to work the net and lift the fish out; when you have lifted him out and disposed of your net, the rod rests in the hollow of the arm, and both hands can be employed upon the fish and the hooks.

And now as to casting. Unless you are casting long casts from the bank, you do not adopt the Thames style, but with a long rod, and rather more line out than the length of the rod, you swing the bait upwards by the underhand swing. This is the general plan, but I adopt a much better one, and get out more line than can be got out in this way, by adopting the method described at page 45 in Nottingham dace-fishing. By this plan the angler can get out nearly twice the length of his rod; and that is enough to work pleasantly with.

Some fishermen fish up-stream and some down; but though drawing down-stream has some advantages, yet in doing so the angler must spin faster than is quite advisable. To throw slantwise across and downwards when the water is at all coloured, and upwards, perhaps, when it is clear, if it be found desirable from the shyness of the fish, may be considered the best plan generally. I do not like spinning the minnow either directly up or down-stream. If the angler is wading, he can either wade down or up, according to the above rule, casting upon either hand as he goes, and drawing the bait round into the stream below with a steady and moderately fast sweep. While the bait is making the bend round into the stream is, in nine times out of ten, the moment when the fish takes it. Do not spin too fast, or you run away from the fish, but spin just fast enough to make the bait spin well, which it should do easily. If a fish makes a dash in the water at the bait, but misses it, spin steadily on as though he had not done so, and he may come again. For although a trout may once in a way take a bait when it is checked (and I have known them even to pick it off the bottom), yet a sudden stoppage is more likely to alarm than reassure the already shy fish. There are only certain parts of a stream where fish take the minnow *well;* for instance, in the rough water at the head of the stream for a few yards, and again, though not so well, at the extreme tail; the body of the stream seldom gives many fish. I do not mean to say that the angler will not get one now and then, particularly if the fish are plentiful; but by far the best place for the minnow is the first few yards of each stream.* Dull pools, as a matter of course, are not commended for minnow, though *at times* any water will give fish to the minnow if they are there; but sharp rattling or swiftly gliding water is far preferable.

When a fish runs, some anglers hit him hard, and some raise the point of the rod and tighten the line, and hold on to him for a second. I think a strike is preferable. If a fish will stand striking tolerably sharply you know that the hook is home. If he will not, it is better to be quit of him at once than to disturb the water by playing him, and then to lose him after all. I am sure that many good fish are lost by not striking, or rather not striking sharp enough ; but do not on any account strike until you feel the tug of the fish—if you do you will often scare him. The best time for the minnow is at the commencement of a flood, when the water is rising, as the fish are then all over the water in search of the food that is beginning to come down.

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* This, of course, applies chiefly to streams where minnow is habitually used. In streams where it is not commonly used the trout will take it almost anywhere, even in almost still water *for a time;* but they soon become aware of it.—F. F.

The same plan may be used for preserving minnows as I have recommended for large trout and jack-baits, namely, of preserving them in spirits of wine.* It is a far better one than the common plan of salting, as salting the minnows renders them soft, so that every run will be likely to cost you a fresh bait whether you get a fish or no, while the colour and brilliancy are much impaired. One thing, however, I have remarked, and I have heard other anglers remark the same thing, though it may only be a fancy difficult to prove, viz. that trout seem to like the flavour of a salted minnow, and, after missing it, often dash at it more savagely than they do at a fresh one. I may say, too, that the very best trout I ever caught in my life, weighing twelve pounds and a quarter, and which I have now in a case (it was beautifully set up by Cooper, that prince of fish stuffers), was caught with a salted dace ; and the fish took it so greedily that he almost swallowed it, some of the hooks being nearly in his throat. There may be something in this, or there may be nothing beyond the trout being hungry ; but, as I have said, I have heard other anglers make the same remark, and I see no reason why a fish should not indulge in a taste.

With regard to spinning a minnow in small trout rivers, I have only this advice to give : do not do it if it be a fair fly-fishing stream, and the stream be in at all fly-fishing order ; you spoil the sport, probably, of many others who may be fly-fishing after you, for a slight increase of sport for yourself—a very selfish consideration, and very exasperating to the others. Indeed, were I the owner of a good trout stream, I would allow neither minnow, worm, live-fly, nor night-fishing ; when the trout will not take the fly fairly before dark, they should have the benefit of their knowledge. Large bags would not be made thus, but moderate sport in fair weather would be got through the season. In some rivers much of the water is heavy and not very favourable mayhap for fly-fishing, and spinning is therefore allowed; but I say, never mind the heavy waters, they will form reservoirs or depots whence the shallower fly-fishing portions can be kept stocked, for the good fish *will* come on to the shallows at times to feed, and one good fish caught with the fly is worth three caught with minnow, in point of sport. If, however, it be held indispensable that minnow should be allowed, do not let it clash with the fly, but prohibit it until the latter end of the season, when it may be used for a limited time when the fly becomes only *doubtfully* attractive.

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* See first footnote on p. 86.—Ed.

Very few words are sufficient for par-tail fishing, as the method is precisely similar to minnow spinning. The tackle almost invariably used is that shown in Plate IX, Fig. 5, page 211. To cut a par-tail bait: take a sharp knife and slice the little fish through from the fore part of the dorsal fin to midway between the anal and ventral fins, cut off the fins, thread the big hook down through the bait, beginning at the tail, and bending the fine end of the cut on the bend of the hook to give the twist, hook on the lip-hook, and let the triangle hang loose. N.B. Take particular care the water-bailiff does not note your operations, or you will very probably be fined for killing salmon fry; for this reason I say little about the par-tail, but I feel bound to notice it, as it is a style which has prevailed, chiefly in the north, for many years.

In spinning in lakes, the style of tackle recommended for Thames trout should be used. It should be pretty heavily weighted, the line paid out some forty or fifty yards behind the boat, the rod depending over either quarter of the stern. The water between deep and shallow will be found the favourite lay for good fish; then row slowly and steadily along, trailing the bait behind. In all other matters, much that I have already said as to lake-fishing will apply.

THE GRAYLING (*Thymallus vulgaris*)

I have a very high opinion of this fish. If the trout be the gentleman of the streams, the grayling is certainly the lady, and I think it in some respects little inferior to the trout, and in others superior to him; for example, grayling seldom become so shy as trout do. There are many well-whipped streams where, after the middle of July, unless specially favoured by the water and weather, you have little or no hope of getting a trout of any size to move until dusk or almost dark ; yet come upon a bit of grayling water in such streams, and you are almost as likely to take a brace of grayling in August as you are in May. The grayling supplies, too, capital fly-fishing from the time the trout goes out almost until he comes in again. The worst point of comparison is in his play, and in this he is certainly inferior to the trout, for although when hooked he requires much more tender treatment, and is far more liable to part company with you than the trout, his play after a very short time is too often composed of a series of rolls and tumbles, which are less graceful and pleasing than the rapid motion and sharp resistance of the trout ; in fact, though now and then one would fight very boldly and well, too often they behave as a trout might be imagined to do if he had been drinking success to the May fly rather too freely.

Grayling should not be fished for till August ; they are not worth eating before that, and not very good then. A September fish is better than an August fish, October better than September, and November best of all. All through the winter, on a warm, sunny midday, you may get sport ; and even if it be not a warm sunny day, you need hardly despair as the fish are in condition in winter, and must needs feed at some time, though certainly a glimpse of sunshine serves to bring out the flies, and to bring up the fish wonderfully.

Another good point in the grayling, too, is, that he is not like the trout in his method of feeding. When a trout is feeding at the bottom, as a rule, he will not look at the top, and when the rise of the fly is over on very many trout rivers, there is an end of your trout-fishing, *pro tem.* ; on others, if you see no trout moving, it is useless to whip the water. When fly is rising, trout take up a position favourable to rising at the fly, and favourable to their securing it with the least trouble, and in the least possible depth of water, which they can conveniently rise through. But whether it be that the huge dorsal fin in the grayling permits him to rise much more rapidly through deeper water than the trout or no, I cannot say ; but these conditions do not always exercise the same control over the rising of the grayling. It is (barring bad weather, when nothing could be expected to move) always a favourable time for him. He has always one of his little lozenge-shaped eyes on the top of the water as well as at the bottom, and no matter whether there be fly on the water or not, whether you see a fish break the surface or no, you have still a chance with the grayling; and my advice to the young hand at grayling-fishing is—fish away, never mind two straws what the water may be, fish the whole of it, and fish it out, and never neglect the deep still reaches, as grayling lie and take better in them (particularly early in the season) than trout do; if fish are not moving, search the banks well, and you always have *a chance* with the grayling. Of course I am not assuming that you will always be certain of sport, but I have often had the best sport when I have not seen a fish rise save at my own fly.

A grayling rises very quickly, and also refuses quickly, and when he does rise you can hardly strike too soon; but as, *more particularly in deepish water*, he has to rise from some depth, you should not hurry the fly in casting, but make your cast rather drag. For this reason, fishing up-stream and drawing down is not the best method of fishing, because you do not give the fish time, and all experienced grayling fishers cast directly across stream as close as possible to the opposite bank, where the best fish of course lie, and let it drag slowly round down-stream, bringing it round by so directing the point of the rod even to your own bank. For the same reason, a little bit of tinsel is often used in grayling flies, which in all other respects do not differ from those used for trout. Grayling are very partial to the little blue and yellow duns and spinners, and these always prove the great *pièce de resistance* in the choice of flies for grayling. A grayling, though he is not difficult, unless very much whipped over, to rise to your fly, is scarcely so easy to basket. It is not at all uncommon for him to rise four or five times, sometimes refusing altogether, and sometimes taking after all. A trout seldom rises fairly above twice, and if he refuses twice you may leave him, as you do more harm than good in casting over him. Not so with a grayling: after three or four rises, give him a minute, and then come over him again either with the same or a fresh fly, and he will as often as not fasten.

When you have hooked a grayling, your next job is to land him; and here though his play, as I have said, is by no means so lively and varied as that of the trout, yet is the kind of resistance he makes more dangerous to the hold you have of him than the running to and fro of the trout, for your grayling

PLATE X.

Fig 1.

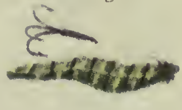

Fig 2.

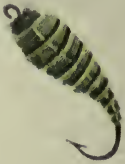

Fig 3.

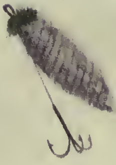

Fig 4.

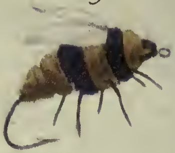

Fig 5.

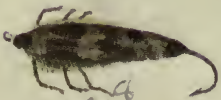

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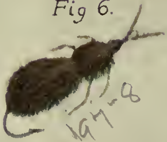
Fig 6.



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IMITATIONS OF GRUBS AND BEETLES.

tries the hold of the hook in every possible way, and from every opposite point and direction of that hold, and usually hangs all his weight on the line at the same time. Having a very soft and delicate mouth, it is common enough for them to break away; and the bigger the fish the more tenderly you must treat them. There are twice or three times the number of grayling lost after hooking that there are of trout.

Of course, the grayling rises best in the morning and evening when the flies are about thickest, that is, during the summer and autumn, but he will none the less, as I have said, rise all day to some extent. In winter, the middle day fishing is the best; evening, save under very favourable circumstances indeed, being comparatively useless.

There are various ways of taking the grayling—by the grasshopper, by the gentle or maggot, by the caddis bait, or by worm, but I hesitate to notice them, as the grayling is such a sporting fish, and so free to rise to all comers, that it is a disgrace and a shame to treat him like a poacher, with worms and such abominations. Still, as in an angling book one has to consult everybody's tastes but one's own, I suppose I must give the information, or it would be considered an "hiatus," though not perhaps "valde deflendus."

The most slaughtering way of fishing for grayling is with the grasshopper. The grasshopper, so-called, is not a grasshopper at all, and though actually an artificial bait, in nowise resembles a grasshopper: why it should have been called a grasshopper any more than a gooseberry, which it much more resembles, I cannot conceive. No matter; this is the grasshopper. Take a No. 5 or 6 trout-hook; lap round the shank some lead, enough to sink it pretty quickly; over this wind Berlin wool of various colours, chiefly green, with a few turns of yellow or red, or both, until you have a thing resembling Fig. 2, in Plate X. Mr. Wheatley, an angler of great experience in this kind of fishing, and whose illustrations I have borrowed, recommends Fig. 1, and its advantage is evident. Fig. 3, on the same plate, gives an illustration of a wasp-grub imitation, made of a very light buff or dirty white wool, in the same way as the grasshopper, which is almost equally killing for grayling and trout.

With as much line as you can conveniently cast and work, pitch your bait into every likely place, particularly into every deep eddy and swirly hole, working it up and down, sinking and drawing with constant short jerks of the wrist, never allowing it to remain still an instant, until the whole of the water be thoroughly searched; at every touch strike pretty smartly, but not violently, and disturb the water as little as possible in landing your fish, as in October and November, when this deadly lure is chiefly used, the fish are often congregated in good numbers in any favourite hole, and with caution many may be caught before the rest are scared. Wheatley recommends a float as an addendum to this process—out on it! and he also recommends the point of the hook to be tipped with a bait of worm or a maggot, to flavour it.

To give some idea of the deadly nature of these baits on some streams, I have known instances where by the use of it, large twenty-five or thirty pounds baskets have been filled and emptied three times over in one day's fishing by a single rod, and they are always the best and largest fish. It is quite incomprehensible, as on other rivers they take no more notice of the bait than they would of a turnip; its use being confined chiefly to the Worcester and Shropshire streams—the tributaries of the Severn, in fact. It has often been tried in Hampshire, and has not yet succeeded, as far as I know. I dare say it would do in the Derbyshire Wye, but only fly is allowed there fortunately. At Leintwardine, on the Teme, it was allowed for a short time, and the slaughter made of the grayling was positively dreadful, and it was again prohibited, save for about four days in the year, that is, two days before and two after the annual dinner at Leintwardine, as a sort of *bonne bouche* for those who go down to the dinner. Tremendous bags are made then, but it is found that its use spoils the fly-fishing, as does the minnow with trout; and it has been clearly proved there that when it is not used the big grayling rise much more freely to the fly. It is certainly an artificial bait, and that is all that can be said for it; if it be used, some restriction should be placed on it.

Grayling are also fond of the maggot or gentle, and may be whipped for with them, the bait sinking even to mid-water at times, or a very light quill-float, with about three shots—a tripping bait—a few gentles being thrown in now and then as ground-bait. A Nottingham line and reel may be employed. A red worm may also be used either in the same way or with a free line, as for trout, and that certainly is the more sportsman-like plan of the two. All these plans, though possible, are not to my mind legitimate, as there is scarcely any reasonable water or weather when grayling will altogether refuse the fly;

and though, in a book in which it is my desire to give the fullest information upon every style of angling, I feel bound to mention these methods, I do not feel disposed to enlarge much upon them, as I certainly never would resort to them myself. Sometimes a grayling may be taken with the minnow, but it is rather an accident than otherwise. In like manner barbel and chub take a minnow or small gudgeon, but no one would fish thus for them. It is needless to say fish fine for grayling, as if you do not you will soon learn to. A wee silver dun with a tinsel body, and the lightest blue hackle, is a prime favourite everywhere.

As I have said, grayling are in the best season in the autumn and winter. Indeed, they should not be taken till August, and all caught before that period should be returned; but unfortunately a grayling, more particularly the female grayling,* always, even directly after spawning, *looks* so bright and clean, and so plump, that it is not until it is cooked the novice discovers he has a very indifferent fish before him. In truth, at this time, and for long after, the fish is scarcely eatable, and until August at least is not worth a rush. Cut a grayling in June, and cut one in November, and the difference is most remarkable. Although in June he may be a handsome-shaped and bright-looking fish, his play is unusually dull, and his flesh like that of an indifferent roach, soft, spongy, and flavourless. In November he has a blue bloom on him like a rich plum; he has a peculiar and strong fragrance when handled, which is said to be like thyme, and is so to some little extent, and his black spots contrast brilliantly with the dazzling silver of his belly; and as for his flesh, it is as hard, firm, and flaky as a trout's when in the best condition.

Throw him in again, then, brother fisherman, till at least the middle of July be turned. Whereas, if you do take him in May or June, listen to my solemn anathema, and let it lie heavy on your soul. May your rod top smash at the ferrule, and the brazing stick in tight at the commencement of your "crack day of the season," and may you be unable to beg, borrow, or steal another rod within twenty miles. May you travel hundreds of miles into a strange country, find the river in splendid ply, and then discover that you have left your reel at home. May you bait a pet pitch for a week in order to have a stunning day with your dear old pal, Jorkins, and when you step out in the grey of the morning, with everything in readiness for a slaughtering day, find your hatred and detestation, that—anathematised—Tomkins fishing it, and having no end of sport, such, indeed, as you have never had, and hardly hope to have ever again ; and now go and catch your grayling in May and June, and much good may they do you. I hope you'll eat 'em—all of 'em—that's all ; and that your wife will have locked up the brandy, and gone out for a day or two ; and please send for Dr. Francis to administer consolation. Ha ! ha ! ho ! I hate a man who slaughters kelts and ill-conditioned fish more than any other species of poacher going. What good does it do him ? He has had his sport. Let him be satisfied ; and let the poor beast live to grow fat and healthy, and don't take a mean advantage of starvation and illness.

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* The male is often ugly, long-headed, lead-coloured, and black-bellied, after spawning, the female hardly ever.—F. F.

Grayling are supposed not to have been indigenous to England, but to have been transplanted hither by the monks ; but we have no direct proof of this, and the collateral evidence is worth nothing.* First, it is assumed that they were so introduced by the monks because on or near every river containing grayling there are the remains of monastic institutions. I am not quite sure that this is invariably so, but if it were, one might easily ask whether in the first place the monks came to the grayling with that perspicacity they are so remarkable for, or whether the grayling came to them. Again, it might be asked, how many rivers of any note are there in the country on or near which, in some sort, institutions of monastic origin have always been absent ? I am not at all convinced, clever though the monks were in fish matters, that they introduced grayling, and I am rather inclined to think that if they had introduced them, the introduction would scarcely be so partial as it is. Grayling abound in many of the Scandinavian rivers and lakes, and are found in very many of the German and Swiss rivers; and that they should also be found in some of the English rivers is perhaps not much more surprising than that the trout or other fish common alike to England and the Continent should be found in both. However, it is not a matter of much consequence to us. The matter that is of consequence is, that the fish suits many of our streams, and would suit many more if it were introduced to them. It is found in the Teme, the Lugg, the Wye, and their tributaries, wherever they are found to suit it. It is found in many of the Yorkshire rivers, the Ure and the Swale especially. It is found in the Derbyshire streams, as the Wye, the Derwent, and the Dove. It is found in the Hampshire rivers, the Avon, Itchen, and Test; but here we know that it has been introduced, and has succeeded fairly. It has been brought also into the Clyde, where it has thriven well. But there are very many other rivers, as several of the tributaries of the Thames, where it could be easily naturalised, as the two Colnes, the Windrush, parts of the Mole, the Darent, the Wey, the Brent, and others, for it is not every river which will suit the grayling; whereas almost any river, if not already overrun with coarse fish, will suit the trout, if there are any shallows at all for it to spawn on. Grayling love deep eddies and quiet reaches, but they also like sharp and rapid shallows—a weedy shallow which ends in a deep safe eddy, with a gravelly bottom, and loamy hollowed-out banks, being the especial abiding-place of grayling; and where these alternate with sharp bends, full of nooks and corners of refuge, the stream will suit grayling to admiration.

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* Grayling are undoubtedly indigenous in the rivers of the English east coast from the Yare of Norfolk to the Humber, including the Trent and all its tributaries. Its presence there dates from a remote period when these rivers were tributaries of the Rhine as it flowed through the great plain now covered by the North Sea. That the grayling is not indigenous to the Thames (where it has been introduced in recent years) seems either to imply that some obstruction prevented its access to that river from the Rhine, or to confirm the theory of Sir Andrew Ramsay (1814–1891), sometime President of the Geological Society, that the Thames originally flowed from east to west into the Severn Valley, and that its course was reversed in consequence of the depression which formed the North Sea and an eastward tilt of the chalk and eocene beds through which the Thames flows.—Ed.

I must touch on one other point before I have done with grayling. It is said that they diminish the trout. I doubt much if they diminish the trout more than the trout themselves do. They will eat trout spawn, and so will a hungry trout, and that to any extent. But I have fished some of the best grayling streams, and trout, both large and small, were fairly abundant, store-fish being by no means wanting. The grayling, of course, deprives the trout of a large portion of the food he would have if left to himself, and it is a curious fact that in good grayling streams the trout are seldom of so good quality or condition as they are in pure trout streams. Whether this be at all owing to the grayling or no, it is difficult to say. I do not think that any number of grayling diminish the trout more than the same number of trout would, and the more particularly as grayling do not habitually feed on the fry, or on their own offspring, while trout do greedily; and for this reason alone grayling will increase faster than trout, as this source of destruction (a very large one in mere trout streams) is wanting as regards the grayling. Grayling certainly are more of burrowers and ground feeders than trout, and if it be thought that the grayling do really diminish the trout, a little artificial breeding would easily keep up the balance. But I conceive that when grayling are introduced into fairly stocked pure trout streams, the following change takes place: as the grayling increase, the trout must either fall off in condition or diminish in number somehow, for a stream will only support a certain number of fish up to a certain size and condition; and if, for example, it holds five thousand trout you cannot put five thousand grayling into it as well, and still keep up the number and condition of your trout. But if, for the sake of extending your sport for many months, or for the variety, you are satisfied with a slight diminution in the weight of your baskets of trout, then you can do well enough; or, if this does not suit, then you must resort to a large system of artificial feeding. To what extent we can or could carry this point of the question in an open stream, is a calculation which experiments in fish culture, to be carried out in the future, alone can assure us of. Everybody can understand that if a field of turnips will support fifty sheep for a month, and you turn twenty cows into it as well, the field will not support the additional call made on it for the same period; but if you choose on this space to draw cart-loads of turnips, then you can support any reasonable quantity of stock as long as you like, and even fatten them like pigs or prize cattle, the increase being regulated by the quantity of turnips you draw on. A stream is in this sense a field of turnips, and you must till it and stock it accordingly; but you must not be surprised, if you starve your cattle, at their being in poor condition, or even at their eating each other's tails off, or even at their dying out. Grayling do not eat trout fry, or but a very few of them, but trout do devour grayling fry; so I am inclined to give the balance of destruction in reality to the trout, which is without exception the most voracious and omnivorous of all fish. Grayling are not so easy to transplant from one river to another as trout, as the ova are much more tender than those of trout, and if the weather should happen to set in warm in April and May, they become very difficult to hatch and rear, and very liable to go off wholesale. In rivers where these fish do take, however, they soon thrive and make their way rapidly, often in a few years outnumbering the trout which may have tenanted the river before them.*

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* Probably most persons interested in or owning fine trout streams would gladly get rid of grayling altogether, were that possible. Grayling spawn in spring, when there is the maximum of insect life to keep trout busy; but trout spawn in late autumn when flies are scarce, and grayling, in the height of condition at that season, feed sumptuously upon trout spawn.—Ed.

CHAPTER IX

THE SALMON

The Rod—The Reel and Line—How to use them—Casting—Striking—Playing a Salmon—Sea Trout Fishing

I HAVE now brought the student on through all the various grades of angling, from the first and earliest efforts of the tyro amongst the smallest and most insignificant quarries of the angler's art, up to what is usually considered the last and highest walk of his skill—the capture of the lordly salmon. If I have been somewhat lengthy, the angler must remember that he has reached, in the short space of 225 pages, the point which it took me—as it does many others—nearly twenty years to reach.

It has been well said that salmon-fishing is sport for kings. Fox-hunting is a noble pastime, and the first burst from the covert side full of joyous excitement. Drawing a bead on the wild red deer after hours of careful stalking, is no doubt an anxious and exciting second. But the bold rise and the first wild rush of a twenty-pound salmon thrills through the frame as nothing else in the nature of sport does ; and I have never known a man who has in him the true essence of a sportsman, and who has for the first time felt and seen the play of a fresh run salmon in his native river, who has not been a salmon-fisher for ever. I have known and heard of scenes and instances where other sports have been given up for salmon-fishing, but never heard I of one (when sport was on) where salmon-fishing was given up for any other : and many a sceptic has been convinced of the truth of all this by having eighteen feet of hickory and a hundred yards of line put into his hands, with a salmon freshly hooked at one end of the line.

There is a story told of a pawky old Scot whose wife was very ill, but who, tempted by the fine ply in which the river was, had just slipped away and stepped down to " tak a cast o' her." He had just risen and hooked a splendid fish which was

"THE SHOT," FLOORS CASTLE WATER, RIVER TWEED.

To face Page 227.

PITLOCHRY HEAD, RIVER TAY.

showing him magnificent sport, when one came running to him wringing his hands and crying, "Laird, laird, the mistress is deein—deein—deein!" "Ah mon! ye dinna say sae! Rin awa' bock thin, Donald, and tell her joost to hing on till a've kill't the fusshe." The words were hardly out of his mouth, when, as if to punish him for his inhumanity, the salmon gave a great spring and broke away. "Was ever the likes o' that?—it's joost a judgment!" was the exclamation, as handing the rod to his retainer, he hurried off to his wife's bedside, and duly received her last breath, and cheered her last moments. Great and sincere was his grief, and he mourned her deeply. Old friends and neighbours came to console him. His old crony, Rab M'Allister, mingled his sympathy with praises of the virtues of the departed. "She was aye a gude wife, laird." The laird assented with a sad shake of the head. "But we're a' dust, laird." "We're that; oh, we're that; dinna doot it," was the melancholy response. "And ye've tint her, laird." At this the laird brightened up. "It's varra true, Rab; but did ye hear o' the big fusshe the news o't tint *me* i' the morn? Hey, mon, that was a fusshe!"

Perhaps of all the branches of angling none have made such strides in popularity as salmon-fishing. Formerly it was confined to the favoured few—to those who could afford to devote a fortnight to travel into Scotland or the wilds of Ireland, and the same time to come back, with all the attendant expense and trouble. But, as in grouse-shooting, all this is greatly altered. In some instances, rivers are still held by their aristocratic proprietors. In many more, however, Manchester and Liverpool, with burly John Bright at their head, have invaded the once sacred soil, bundled out the whilom occupiers, and taken possession, and our oldest and best rods have taken yacht and are gone to Norway, and for a time make a close borough of that once piscatorial Goshen. But a while ago Norway was a pleasant spot for a fisherman. The few fishermen to be met with there were (they are not now) fond of telling of their sport; but they were gentlemen and sportsmen of the old school for the most part, on whose time business had no claims. The natives were civil, easily satisfied, and fishing was easy to come at. But within a very few years business men came in to compete for the prizes. *Civis Londinensis sum;* and so the natives become grasping, and salmon-fishing is, save at high prices and long leases, not to be had. Seek the tourist track anywhere and it will be found the same. Still, to a great extent, the old rods do many of them manage as yet to hold their own in Norway, and they always must do so to some extent, for you cannot be whirled by rail to the Arctic circle in twenty-four hours, and the more distant rivers consume more time to go to and to come from than the great bulk of salmon-fishers of the present day can afford to give to the journey. Another unfortunate feature, however, now largely prevails. Salmon can, by the aid of huge stores of ice which are easily secured, be sent to England profitably, and large quantities are thus sent from the more approachable rivers, and netting is rapidly increasing to an injurious extent.

There are fifty salmon-fishers now for one of twenty years ago. The fisherman who had killed salmon was then looked upon as a tremendous creature. It was something as exceptional as shooting a gorilla, was this killing of a salmon with a fishing-rod. Now the exception is all the other way.

But I ought not to find fault with the increasing popularity of my favourite sport ; and, with this civil growl *de piscatoriis rebus*, I proceed to explain the mysteries of the art. So travel a little farther with me, young trout-fisher, and it shall not be my fault if you do not know all that I know about it.

THE ROD*

The first consideration for the would-be salmon-fisher is the rod. This should be proportioned to his height and strength. Nothing looks so absurd as a little ambitious individual labouring under a huge threshing-machine as big as a sloop's mast, which he is manifestly unequal to the wielding of easily ; and not only does it look badly, but it works badly. A rod two or three ounces heavier or inches longer than is comfortable to the angler, tells dreadfully between the shoulders and on the loins in a long day's fishing ; and it is useless to suppose that practice will make it come much easier : a man who is overweighted *is* overweighted, and all the practice in the world will only serve to do harm instead of good, to strain instead of to strengthen. Even a rod that seems at the first grasp light and short will become heavy enough, and long enough too, in a long day's work. My advice, therefore, to the young salmon-angler is, not to overweight himself in his choice of a rod at the outset, but to work up to a heavier and longer weapon, which practice and time may eventually enable him to manage. Something, too, depends upon the kind of fishing he is going to undertake. If it be boat-fishing upon a lake, a fifteen-foot rod is quite long enough, so that there be plenty of stuff in the butt and the lower part of the next joint, for lake fish often run and pull tremendously.

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* Francis's advice about rods would have been greatly modified had he lived to see the great improvement that has taken place in this part of the angler's equipment during the last thirty years. The use of adhesive tape for binding splices has restored the spliced rod to the position it held before the slip ferrule came into use ; while for those that prefer (and care to pay for) a split cane rod, the bayonet fastening obviates all the inconvenience of ferruled joints.—ED.

The most sporting fish I ever hooked in the whole course of my life was a fish of twelve pounds, which I hooked from the shore on Loch More at Thurso. I never saw such a fish ; he was a regular flyer, and was more out of the water than in. Plunging and leaping from the water, as dolphins are always depicted as doing, particularly on signboards, he took out clear, without stopping for a second, over one hundred yards of line ; and, had I not chanced to have one hundred and twenty on my reel, he would certainly have broken me. The late Sir F. Sykes, a first-rate rod, was run out and broken, with one hundred yards, on the same spot but a few days before. At about one hundred and ten yards I got on terms with him ; and, to see this twelve-pound fish leaping out of the water, at such a distance from me that he did not look larger than a good-sized trout, it was difficult to imagine that there was any connecting link between us. I had no boat, and wading was out of the question. Another ten yards and he would have bid me good-bye. But the tackle was new and sound, the rod well set up in the lower joints, and for the last twenty or thirty yards I let him have it heavily ; and this, with the weight of the line, stopped him. So that, in lake-fishing, if your rod be short it must not be weak.

In boat-fishing on a river also a long rod is not desirable. Where a long rod is of advantage is upon a good-sized sporting river, fishable from the shore, where you have broken ground and water, and where you must often run with your fish ; where, perhaps, wading is frequently indispensable ; and where an extra foot of rod will at times enable you to carry your line over some big stone, rock, or bush, which would, perhaps, cause you inevitable grief with a shorter rod ; and where long casting is required, or where there are high or awkward banks behind you, with rugged stones and roots to smash your hook on. Under such circumstances the angler should use as long a rod as he well can. For a man of short stature and not too robust frame, from sixteen and a half to seventeen and a half feet should be about the limit; for a man of moderate capacity, from seventeen to eighteen and a half, or a little more; for a tall strong man, from eighteen or eighteen and a half to twenty or even twenty-one. I have known as much as twenty-two feet used. The Master of Lovat, I am told, uses a rod of something like twenty-four feet in length; only employing the whole length of the rod, however, when playing a fish, or when a very long or unusual cast is required; at other times, casting by grasping the rod some two feet or more above the reel. Of course, where such rods can be at all easily handled, they are very great advantages.

The next point to consider is the construction of the rod; and this is delicate ground, because it is such a matter of taste and fancy. Some like a very pliant rod and some a very stiff rod; and each may be, to an extent, justified in his choice by the style of fishing he adopts and the waters he fishes. For general work something of a medium character is, perhaps, more suitable. The Irish spliced rods are, to my fancy, rather too whippy or flexible; the Scotch perhaps a trifle the other way. Formerly our London makers were indifferent hands at salmon-rods; but I think now they have made up for any lost time; and I could point to one or two whose productions cannot be beaten in this respect. The prices of London makers range very high; but, if the price is high, the workmanship of a first-class rod is unexceptionable. I have one by me for which I gave £4, and although I have had it these ten years, and have killed hundreds of salmon with it, it is very little the worse for wear. It is rather a moot question with anglers as to which is preferable, a spliced or ferruled rod. If the angler always has an attendant to tie, untie, and retie his splices, and if they do not wear out, then there is no comparison. For actual fishing, the spliced rod is preferable, for not only is the play of the rod nicer, but you avoid the weakness which is established by the junction between the metal and wood; you never are bound to pick the stump of the top joint out of the ferrule after a smash; and you can get from one to two feet more on to the length of the rod for the same weight. But, on the other hand, where you have to tie and untie your own splices, and to retie if they work loose, breaking string now and then, and cutting fingers, &c., etc., the nuisance is so great that I prefer to put up with a ferruled rod—with which, I may say, I have never had a difficulty in getting out any reasonable cast of line, or in killing fish. I think, too, it will be found that a well-made ferruled rod will stand infinitely more wear and tear, more knocking about than a spliced one, for the splices must wear, but the ferrules do not.*

The best wood is unquestionably greenheart, and next to it hickory. Bamboo rods were tried, and proved a failure. The rod now in favour with many of the best hands on the Scotch rivers is a three-joint rod, with a ferrule on the butt, and a splice for the top. It is usually slightly top-heavy, because a good deal of wood is put into the top to stiffen it, in order that the operation of picking the line off the water may be promptly performed; since the length of the cast is controlled by the quantity of line that can be got off cleanly and well, and a stiff top does this better than a limp one. And, certainly, these rods do throw a long line, though somewhat unpleasant to handle at first.

With respect to the weight of salmon-rods, I may say that I have two old rods which have been in use several years, and the weight of each is as follows. I have one of Farlow's, a four-jointed ferruled rod, 17 ft. 7½ in. long, and the weight of which is but 2 lb. 6 oz. This some persons would almost regard as a grilse-rod; yet I can put out a good long line with it, and have killed hundreds of fish with it. For a lake or small river it is amply large. The other rod is an old Bowness and Chevalier; it is 18 ft. [illegible] in. long, and weighs 3½ lb. It is a very powerful rod, and very large in the butt. Both of these rods are hickory. To show the difference in the weight of this wood and greenheart, I subjoin the weight of four rods weighed at Farlow's:—

No. 1, 18 feet, greenheart ferruled . . .	2 lb. 10 oz.
No. 2, 19 feet, hickory butt, and the rest greenheart ferruled	2 lb. 9 oz.
No. 3, 19 feet, hickory butt, all greenheart ferruled	3 lb.
No. 4, 20 feet, all greenheart and spliced . .	2 lb. 13 oz.

So that a spliced rod is very little heavier than a ferruled one two feet shorter; while a hickory butt makes a difference of one-fifth or one-sixth in the weight.

And now for the reel and line. The winch should be the common click or check winch. I like one to be capable of holding 120 or 130 yards of line. Some people think a little more than half that quantity sufficient. Twice or three times in my life I should certainly have been broken if I had not had more than one hundred yards, and on each occasion I have been lucky enough to slay my fish. I grant it does not happen once in a hundred times in ordinary salmon-fishing that one parts with more than, or even as much as one hundred yards, but the weight of a score or two of extra yards of line is so insignificant a matter, and the confidence and satisfaction there is when playing a large fish, in knowing that you have ample for all hazards, incline me to hold to my opinion ; besides, a line of that length can easily be turned end for end when at all worn, and will serve as two good lines, which is a matter of economy, whereas in a sixty or seventy yards line turned thus you would soon get into the weak part in a good run that you would always be in danger, because the pull would come just at the distance where a fish is at his strongest—at the end of a forty or fifty yards run.*

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* Since writing this, I propounded the same opinion to a first-class rod-maker, and he told me that they had found that such was the case, and that a slight reaction in favour of [illegible] had been the result.—F. F.

Formerly salmon lines were twisted and made of horse-hair alone, or of horse-hair and silk ; but eight-plait dressed silk lines having been introduced, the others are now not often used, as the eight-plait silk line which has been carefully and well dressed runs through the rings so much more smoothly, is less liable to kink or catch, and does not hold so much water, besides throwing better against the wind. Tapered lines, or lines which are gradually reduced to a smaller size towards the end, are usually much preferred. Their cost is greater, but they have this advantage : they cast more evenly, and do not sink so deeply in the water towards the point, and are therefore fetched off it more easily, and, as already stated, as the length of the cast is governed by the quantity which can be easily and quickly withdrawn from the surface, it will at once be seen that there is a considerable advantage in a well-tapered line. It must be remembered that heavy rods and heavy waters require heavy lines ; but unless the angler wishes to strain his top joint, and open the splices, he should never use a heavy line to a light rod. It is inconceivable what an amount of mischief in wear and tear, and what a lot of bad casting, and what a bad style of casting is fostered by want of attention to this point. Rod and line should match each other, and a line either too light or too heavy is a nuisance and an evil.

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* Here again present-day anglers enjoy a convenience unknown to Francis. Of a reel line 150 yards in length, not more than 40 or 50 yards need be of the weight necessary for casting, the rest consisting of tarpon "backing," which, being very fine and as strong as an eight-plait dressed silk line, enables one to use a much smaller and lighter reel.—Ed.

The casting-line or gut bottom is the next point of consideration. For my own part, I always like about three lengths of treble twisted gut, and two of good double gut, and then the single gut—in all close upon four yards. Let it be good sound, round, reliable gut, not mere makeshift rubbish.* The gut should be stained either amber or green for peat or limestone waters. Coffee lees give the first, boiled green baize or walnut shucks steeped, the second. No other colour is admissible. Some, as I have already said, use ink; this might do if one rented pools on the Styx, but elsewhere it is a bad and unnatural dye, and shows plainly in any water. Better no dye at all than this, for though a pool may look dark and black to the eye it is usually only the result of the rocky bed, the depth, or overshadowing rocks; it does not look so to the fish from below. Whether the angler uses one, or two, or even three flies on his cast, must be decided by the water he is going to fish. In some waters more than one fly is dangerous, in others it answers well enough. In lake-fishing, for example, two and even three flies may often be used with advantage; and on the Tay and such broad heavy waters also, three flies are used habitually. The salmon fly should always be tied upon a hook with a loop eye at the head. Whether this loop be formed as part of the hook itself, or be lashed on, matters not here. Supposing it to exist, pick out a nice round, lengthy strand of gut, if the fly be used as a single fly or as a stretcher; if a dropper, it may be shorter, say of four or five inches when attached. Tie a sound loop in the upper end wherewith to loop it to the casting-line, then put the other point through the eye, take a turn of the gut round the eye until the point is on the same side as the gut first came through the eye, then return it through the eye again, and you have it looped on to the eye of the hook. The end, however, is still loose, and it is evident that at any strain it would slip back again through the eye. Then take the fly in your left hand, take hold of the fag end, and make a complete turn round the gut, and put the end through the tie or opening thus formed—in fact, make a regular tie knot, and draw it tight, after the style of tying shown in Plate III, Fig. 1, page 66. Repeat the operation so as to make two knots lying side by side, as closely as possible. Pull the knots home as tightly as you can, by taking the fag end between your teeth or pliers, then pull the gut and slide the knots down to the eye, cut off the end, and your fly is ready to be looped on to the cast.

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* Various substitutes for gut have been introduced of late years, and personally I have quite abandoned gut in spring salmon-fishing, using only the material sold as "Demos." Its strength is much greater than that of the best gut—it costs about sixpence a yard and is supplied in 40 yard lengths. But it requires care in handling. A figure-of-eight knot at the head of the fly is quite safe; but if, as often happens in windy weather, a knot forms accidentally in the cast, a very slight jerk will snap it. That is the only drawback I know to Demos. Its merits are that it has no glitter, the casting line is in one piece, it is of extraordinary strength and absurdly cheap. Fishing with a friend in the Spey one March, he had the misfortune to lose his casting line through the reel line breaking. It was a new cast for which he gave fifteen shillings. A similar accident to myself would have cost me just one shilling!—ED.

And now we will suppose that the angler is suited with rod, line, cast, and flies. We will assume that he knows something of fly-fishing, has at least used a single-handed trout rod. The motions gone through with the rod point are precisely similar with a single and a double-handed rod, save that a somewhat wider sweep is made with the latter. The left hand holds the rod below the reel, and the right grasps it at a convenient spot above; sufficient line is let off the reel for the cast; the point of the rod is waved backwards over the right shoulder; the right hand comes almost to the level of the shoulder (in long casts a trifle above it). Give the line time to extend itself backwards, making a sweep round with the point of the rod, still feeling the line as you do so; direct it towards the mark as in trout-fishing. You can either make the curve (or the cast rather) *towards the ear* or *away from the ear*. The first will be found most suitable when fishing with a short line, but the latter is indispensable when fishing with a long one, as in no other way can the line be got off the water so quickly or neatly. This is the right shoulder cast. To ease the muscles and to suit a particular airt of wind, or the direction or bank of the stream, it is often advantageous to cast from the left shoulder instead of the right. To do this reverse the hands—the right below, the left above the reel—and bring the rod to the left shoulder instead of the right. The other motions are the same as in the right shoulder cast, save that in the left hand cast it will be found easier to make the sweep towards or nearer to the ear.

The length of your cast must be governed by your ability, but always, when actually fishing, cast well within yourself—

that is, so that you can fish the cast well and thoroughly, and have perfect command over your rod top and line. A greater mistake cannot be made than to overcast either your throw or yourself. Some anglers are so fond of making long casts just to show off, that they will risk cutting a fly to pieces rather than move a few yards; others will so overcast their throw, that by the time the fly reaches the salmon's home, if a fish should rise, the rod is too upright or far back to allow them to make a clean firm stroke—the fish is only half hooked, and a bungle is pretty sure to ensure. Begin with about twice the length of the rod, not more, and when you can get that out well, increase the length.

It is impossible on paper to teach the tyro how to cast a salmon fly. Nothing but practice will do it. Even actual showing and demonstration are not of much use until he can command the rod to some extent. Let him note how it is done, and then flail away to the best of his ability for a day or two until he can pitch the line out somehow. Then let him get some adept to instruct him how to get it out properly, and to correct any fault in his manipulation. After that, practice, practice, practice, and watching a performer now and then at work will do the rest.

Another rule of great importance I would here emphatically lay down, and that is, never use more strength or vigour in making a cast than is absolutely necessary, for all beyond that is not only downright waste of power, but positively defeats the end the fisher has in view. Let him study, not how much strength he can put into the cast, but how little; not how much noise he can make by " swooshing " his rod through the air, but whether he cannot avoid making any at all. And if any old angler, who has been accustomed to adopt the former plan, will only try the latter a few times, I am confident that the result will positively amaze him. It is astonishing how hard it is at times, with all your force, to send a fly against or through the wind truly and fairly, and how easy it really is to do with little or no force at all. When I hear an angler's rod " swooshing " through the air on a windy day, as one often may hear it seventy or eighty yards away, I think it very extraordinary that he should never by accident have discovered that all that force and noise is not only superfluous, but mischievous; and how that without it he would cast an infinitely better line, and not strain his rod as he is doing. In very long throws, of course, a good deal of force must be employed; but in ordinary ones, no matter what the weather or wind, or which way it blows, it is absolutely unnecessary. I have often surprised myself by seeing how beautifully straight the fly goes, without doubling or bagging, through the wind, by merely letting the top do the work it was intended for. The angler should consider that he does not cast with the butt or main joints of his rod, and need not therefore try to bring them into play. The part of the rod which sends the fly home is the most pliable part; why not, then, let that do its duty, instead of trying to make the less pliable parts take its place, which they cannot and do not do?

And now as to long casting. Thirty yards from the reel to the fly is good casting, and every yard beyond that very good casting; and whenever you hear a person bragging of long casting, ask him whether he measured the cast, and how he measured it, as fishermen do not always carry a yard measure, and are apt to measure too much by computation and too kindly to themselves. The longest cast I ever measured was within a foot of thirty-eight and a half yards from the reel, and that was cast by the late Sir F. Sykes, who was a tall and powerful man, and who was fishing with a twenty-foot rod, which I could hardly manage. I may have seen longer casts, and I think I have, but I did not have the opportunity of measuring them. The most I could ever manage was thirty-four and a half yards from the reel, and this I did on one or two occasions with two different rods, one eighteen and the other nineteen feet long—the former a ferruled, and the latter a spliced rod; but it was *from a boat*, and consequently there was no hazard of smashing the fly if it touched behind. Pat Hearns, of Ballina, has, I believe, cast forty-two yards. I do not know whether it was measured from the point or the reel; but as it was for a wager, and many gentlemen were looking on, the fact is indisputable.

There is a very good dodge which is practised when a very long cast is required to be fished. Having as much line as you can cast out, draw a yard or two off the reel and let it hang down between the hand and reel as in spinning; when you have made the forward impulse, and the fly is rushing towards the point sought to be reached, open the hand that clasps the rod and line, and the impetus and weight of the line will take with it some of the loose line, and when it touches the water the hang or drag of the stream will carry out the rest. Before fetching the line off the water for a new cast, the part so let out must be drawn in and allowed to hang loose as before.

In making a long cast the difficulty is to take all the time possible to allow the line to straighten behind *without allowing the fly to touch the ground.* For long throwing, the best wind is no wind ; because, although it may be supposed that a wind at your back may help the fly forwards, it does not help it backwards, and the quantity you can send forward is, as I have said, determined by the quantity you can extend fairly backwards. But for ordinary fishing the performer who can *fish* some six or seven-and-twenty yards, and fish it well (for there is all the difference in the world between casting and fishing), is a very excellent performer.

I have mentioned switching* in trout-fishing, but it is chiefly used in salmon-fishing. It is a species of cast that is made when there are high banks or rocks at the angler's back, so that he cannot send his line behind him. And it is one that requires some practice to make from the right shoulder, and a good deal more to accomplish neatly from the left. In switching, if the angler can contrive to wade in a yard or two, he will be able to switch with far less danger to his fly, and more ease to himself, than when standing on the shore, as the object is to deposit the fly on the water previous to casting. If the fisher fetches his fly home only a yard farther than it ought to come, he either smashes it or hooks some obstruction.

Having got a certain length of line out, somehow or anyhow, and being desirous of making a new cast, he raises his hands well up and carries the rod up to his shoulder pretty smartly ; but he does not send the fly back over the shoulder, but rather fetches it in towards his feet, and he must take care that in doing so it does not come too high above the surface of the water, or it will not catch the water again at the right spot. About two or three yards above him to his right hand, and a little in front of him, the fly must touch the water, but must go no further. This action brings the line into the form of a great bow or arc, to which the rod is the chord. The instant the fly touches the water (and the angler must keep his eye upon it, for if he misses it and touches the bank at all he must not make his cast), a sharp downward turn and cut is made, not towards the spot you wish the line to go to, but to establish a sort of centrifugal action (somewhat after the fashion that a juggler spins a hat or plate with a stick), and the line flies towards the point required; in fact, the cast is the result of the laws of centrifugal force, the line forms the tangent to an arc of a circle described sharply with the rod point, and the angle at which the tangent flies off is controlled by the practice and experience of the angler. It is not an easy cast to make, and requires a good deal of practice. It is hardly possible to describe it, and must be seen and studied to be understood clearly. Fig. 15, Plate XXI, page 326, will show the position of the line and the attitude of the fisherman at the most critical moment of the cast.

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* This cast is called by various names ; sometimes "the Welsh or Spey cast," or according to the name of some other river where it is practised.
F. F.

It is impossible to lay down any rule as to how a salmon cast should be fished, further than that it should be fished in the way which suits it best, and this the old salmon-fisher will know from long experience, and the young one from his attendant, who knows the cast and its peculiarities well, and without whom the tyro will be very foolish to try his luck. Some people who know very little of salmon-fishing lay down diagrams of instructions, etc., which are so much waste paper. The only point to be observed in salmon-fishing is, that whereas in trout fishing you often fish up-stream, in salmon-fishing you more often fish down. True, you may occasionally, with an obstinate salmon that won't be persuaded, try a cast up-stream and drag down, and may even once in a way get him up to it, but as a rule you fish down and work up-stream. Even when casting across you work as much against the stream as you can. Of course this does not apply to dead water or large eddies, where the fish lie anyhow. Some anglers, and some writers, lay great stress upon working your fly, and how you are to humour it into the stream, and make it work so that all the fibres like pinions open and shut like a living thing, etc.; but it is all chips and porridge. I know two first-rate professional fishermen who live but a few miles apart on the same river. One always works his fly, the other swears by a steady draw and an even keel, and yet one is as good as t'other, and they both kill their fair share of salmon. Hear what Mr. Colquhon, a very old sportsman and no mean fly-fisher, says.* When he has tried a pool in vain, he makes his cast and merely winds the line home; this he calls winding over, and it often rises a fish when other means have failed. Of course when a salmon is shy you try all sorts of ways to make him come up:

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* In *The Moor and the Loch.*

first a gentle undulation of the rod point; then an even draw; then a regular frantic witches' dance, bobbing, and jerking, and working as though your fly were possessed of St. Vitus or a tarantula bite; then you sink the fly, and perhaps none of them avail, and then what is to be said of it? Perhaps he does come up to one or the other. If so, that is the killing style for the time; for salmon, like maidens, are sometimes capricious. Sometimes they like a quiet partner in a corner all to themselves, and sometimes nothing but a regular frantic *deux temps* will suit them. Depend upon it, brother angler, that there is no dogmatic rule to be laid down either for maidens or fish. Take the word of one who hath had experience of both. You can't diagram them; you must study their humours as well as you can, and suit your arts to your customer as near as may be. If that fails, try perseverance. Versatility is good, but perseverance will often carry the day against all comers. How often have I seen a salmon regularly bullied into rising by an obstinate customer who wouldn't take no for an answer, but who kept flogging on till the favourable moment arrived, when—" Ah! there he is at last: and hooked too, by jingo!" just as often as I have seen a girl take at last a suitor to whom she has said "No" half a score of times—ay, and meant it too at the time, you know, only she happened at last to change her mind, and he happened to be present when she changed it. So "c'est l'amour, l'amour, l'amour." *Is it?* It may be very often; but then again very often it is something else. So, having said so much, I will for the benefit of the embryo salmon-fisher give the generally accepted plan. It is a tolerably safe one; and as he grows experienced, he can vary it to suit his own views.

Having cast your fly—say across and a little downwards, let it sweep round into the stream. You needn't "humour it," as poor dear "Ephemera" used to call it; it will find its place without it, and will not require any humouring on your part beyond free permission to do as it likes; and be sure and keep an eye upon it just as it sweeps round into the stream, for that is a very fatal moment, and it is odds, if there's "a *fusshe* aboot," if you don't at that last fatal curve see a boil, ay, and feel a pluck too, if you are not in too great haste, which will send your blood spinning with excitement. And when you do see the boil and feel the pluck, what then? Now, don't be in a hurry; that is what you should never be in striking a salmon—pause, and I will tell you why presently.

Meanwhile, when your fly is sweeping round, lower the point of the rod gradually, giving line to the fly to cover as much ground as possible; and when it enters on the straight run home, or when the fly is in the stream, and the line tight and straight, raise and fall the point of the rod slightly as you work the fly up-stream, raising and drawing at the same time, until you have the fly far enough up-stream. Never work it too far so as to lose full and strong command over it; if you do, it may hap that a salmon will rise when you have very little power or room left to strike him.

ON STRIKING

Well, "when you see the boil and feel the pluck," what then? Why, when you do so, you are all right, and may raise your rod smartly, with a fair tug, over your shoulder. If you see the boil only, and don't feel him, don't be too hasty; he may be only making an offer—coming up to inspect—and if (as most young and nervous salmon-fishers out of practice do) you strike and pull the fly away from him, he goes down disgusted with the rudeness of the gentleman who has asked him to dinner and then snatched his dinner out of his mouth; and you might almost as well have assaulted him with a fork, or, in other words, have pricked him. Ten times more fish are lost from striking too quickly than by striking too slowly. It *is* hard to wait when you see a fish coming: still, you must wait, or lose your fish. Some people say that when you see the boil of a salmon, if he means to have it, he has already got it. But this is a fanciful theory. He comes up to see what it is that has attracted his attention. If he is not very eager, he first looks and then decides, and you see the boil whether or no. Sometimes the decision is adverse, and he does not take; sometimes, pleased with the nearer inspection, he does. Either way, eight times out of ten there is either the least pause in the world or a very long one, and nothing is gained by pulling away the fly. Sometimes, when very sharp set indeed, he makes no bones of it, but comes straight at it like a lion. That is when you see the boil, and feel the pluck at the same instant. There is not much consideration required with such fish; you can hardly miss them.

But some salmon-fishers say you "should not strike." Yes, I know that; but what they mean by striking is, you shouldn't hit a salmon as if the roof of his mouth were a

PLATE XII.

To face Page 241.

A Salmon Cast on the Wye.

paving stone, or you were punching a whole flight of spinning tackle into a bony old pike, with a mouth like a quartz-crushing machine. But we will effect a compromise, and therefore you should do what they say and I have described, and which they call " letting him hook himself," but I call " striking." To hit a salmon violently as you would a pike, is in some respects certainly not advisable, as you may force him into his most violent and dangerous action when he is best prepared for it, and when possibly the ground is not the most suitable ; whereas, by a gentler mode, not calculated to alarm quite so forcibly, the sharp edge of the steel may often be taken out of him, and you may negotiate your exchanges upon terms of more equality, in case the hooking place is broken water, dangerous with sunken rocks or other obstructions, as it sometimes is.

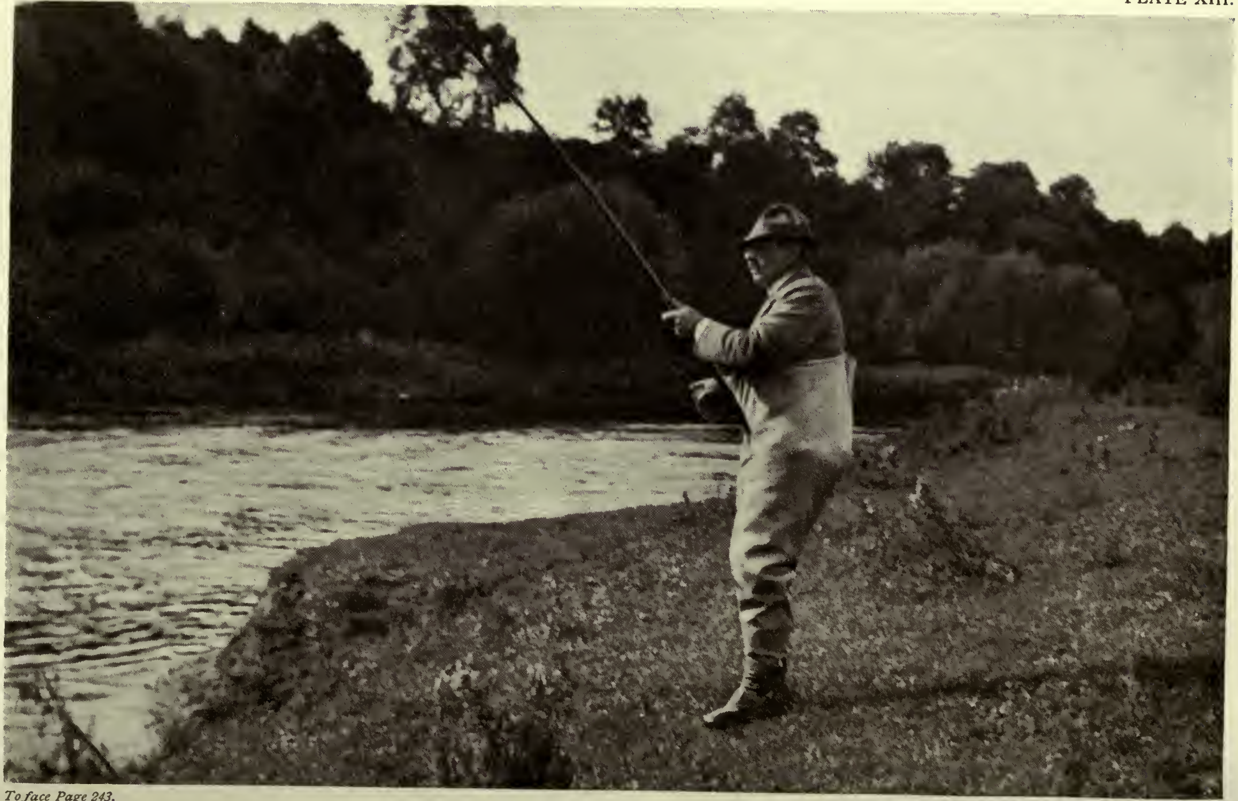
One of the most important points for the angler to master is a knowledge of the hidden dangers, the under-water rocks, etc., with which he will have to contend. A person who possesses this knowledge has, of course, a great advantage in playing his fish over another who has it not. Usually you depend on your attendant to tell you, and warn you of all such dangers. I recollect an absurd but vexatious incident happening to a friend once on the river Wye, near Builth, for the lack of such knowledge. The river was very low, and ran within a narrow but very abrupt rocky channel, a mere broad groove, as it were, in the centre of its natural bed. At the tail of some white water, my friend hooked a good fish, which immediately dashed up into the white water, and came down again close alongside of the near side wall of the channel, which was very abrupt there. Presently my friend observed the salmon, which was still pulling hard, struggling just under his feet, whereas the line was pointing, if anything, rather up-stream ; before he could do anything his line was cut, and the fish away with his cast and some six or eight yards of line. On going to the spot towards which the line had pointed, he found a large stone under water, reclining against the near wall of the channel, but leaving a nice little triangular hole below, of which the stone formed the hypotenuse ; through this the salmon had popped on his down-course, threading the eye of the needle with my friend's line in the most dexterous manner. Of course a little knowledge here would have saved everything and captured the fish.

ON PLAYING A SALMON

Having hooked your fish, the next point to consider is the playing of him, and in this important point, during the first half of the battle, the angler will be guided very much by the fish ; in the latter half the positions will probably be reversed. What can the angler do when he hooks a heavy determined fish ? All that he can do is just to let him take his own way, merely persuading him strongly against the folly of his conduct when he evinces a disposition to run into needless danger, endeavouring to keep the hook in him, diplomatically if possible, until he is amenable to reason. To be sure, in taking him down-stream, if an awkward rock lies far out, and rather in the way, by the above gentle persuasion he may point his head so as to drive clear of it. If he goes on the far side, and the rod is not long enough to lift the line over it, the connection between the fish and the angler will probably cease. In taking a fish, or rather being taken by a fish down-stream—which is always the best course that can be taken—the angler should keep up with the fish if possible. Indeed a salmon should never be allowed to have a yard more of line out than is positively necessary. The fisherman should never spare his legs at the expense of his line. If he does, the fish may, and often does, suddenly turn and dart in the opposite direction, drowning the line, which it is impossible that the angler can get in as quickly as the fish swims, and thus all power over the fish is for a time lost, and the bagged line is liable to take hold of any sunken obstruction that may occur, and, as in " all such cases," obstructions appear to be specially " made and provided," a drowned line is too often a lost fish.

If a fish shows a determination to go to a fall, or rapid, or other undesirable spot where you cannot follow nor stop him, you must butt him. Some writers describe this by recommending you to throw the end of the butt well forward, presenting it to the fish as it were, and putting the rod well to or over your shoulder. But this is not butting the fish ; it is middle-jointing him, and if you want to strain your middle joint beyond redemption the very best way to do it is to follow this plan. If it becomes necessary to butt a fish, the less circular the position taken by the rod the more the strain falls on the butt. Only try, by lifting a weight, in which way the rod will carry most. Let the angler place the butt of the rod against his stomach, and hold the rod pointing out and away from him,

PLATE XIII.



To face Page 243.

The Right Way of Giving the Butt.

at an angle of 45° as nearly as possible. If the resistance becomes very strong, he may raise it a few degrees, but it should never, unless he wishes to strain the middle of his rod, reach the perpendicular, far less go beyond it.*

The artifices of salmon are multifarious, and can only be combatted according to circumstances. "Sulking" is a common one, particularly with heavy fish, and a fish will often take up his position at the bottom of a deep pool behind some big stone, and there he will remain without moving, quietly resisting every effort to stir him, sometimes for a considerable space. A fish of this kind, or a sluggish fish, may sometimes be induced to work by getting behind him, letting out a longish line, so as to get a straight down-stream pull at his head on him. Here let the angler put on a steady heavy strain, accompanying it, if this does not succeed, with a sawing action. The effect of this is to turn the head of the fish a little broadside to the stream, when the force of the stream and the line will cause him *perhaps* to make an effort to keep his position, and the effort may lead him to forget his sulky tactics and aggravate him to rush forth to the battle again. If, however, this has no effect, a few stones judiciously thrown may startle him out of his propriety, and if your gillie *can* manage dexterously to hit the line just where it enters the water with a sharp, heavy flint, he will certainly spare you all further trouble. Sometimes a fish takes up his position at the side of a river, and can be dislodged by the aid of the gaff handle or a pole. But if the fish still remains obstinate and is unapproachable, the aid of a bit of lead which can be bent on round the line in a circle, or a common clearing ring, such as is used sometimes by trout or bottom-fishers to clear a hook from weeds, is recommended by some fishermen. Clasp the ring, if you happen to have one, round the line; hold the line as upright as possible, and let it slide down "rap" on to the salmon's nose. If this unexpected visitation does not send him flying here, there, and everywhere, it certainly ought to, and two or three jerks up and down of the line will be pretty sure to effect the purpose, when the ring can at once be drawn well up the line out of harm's way until an opportunity occurs to unclasp it. A clearing ring and line does not take up much room, and is so useful in a variety of ways to almost every class of angler at times, that I often think it worth while to slip one into my pocket.*

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* The true position of the rod in "giving the butt" is shown in Plate XIII.—Ed.

I always like to see a salmon show himself, and the oftener he jumps out of water the better I am pleased. In the first place, the play of a fish that does so is sure to be the more brilliant and exciting, and in the next, every leap takes so much more out of him than a mere dart through his native element. It is manifest when a salmon springs from the water that, if you keep the point of the rod up and maintain a tight line, the fish in falling on the water with a splash will manage to dash the hook out of his mouth ; consequently whenever a salmon leaps you must keep a slack line by lowering the point of the rod to the water's surface and giving as much line as you can on the spur of the moment, by extending the point as much towards the fish as possible. The instant the fish is in the water again, however, the point must be raised, and a tight line at once recovered.

When a fish "jiggers" or keeps up a constant "jag, jag, jag," at the line, it is a very unpleasant and trying symptom, and it is extremely difficult to say what to do. Some anglers think it advisable to hold him hardish, and to chance the hook taking a fresh hold should he be lightly hooked ; others say play him lightly, as it is a sign of his being lightly hooked. This I am not at all sure of. I think it is a sign that the salmon is a fish of experience, and is trying to shake the hook out by twisting and shaking his head about and turning it in all directions ; and as this is trying the hold of the hook in every possible way, it is not very surprising if such a proceeding frees the fish more often than any other. I have lost many a "jiggering" fish, and, on the other hand, I certainly have caught many such ; but I know of no feeling so unpleasant as the sharp twitch which the process of jiggering communicates, with a thrill of apprehension to send it home, right up to the very shoulder.

I have heard of a hard running fish, when danger is ahead, being stopped in his run by the sudden taking off of the strain on him ; the fisherman casting off plenty of loose line, and the fish finding that he is no longer pulled one way, recognises no necessity for running in another, and so stops. I cannot vouch for the truth of this. It is possible, of course, but it sounds like a risk one would not like to try, and I only mention it for what it is worth.

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* I have never tried this plan, and merely mention it upon the authority of others. Some anglers, however, declare against it, and say that it is rarely feasible.—F. F.

Salmon are often caught by worm, minnow, prawn, and artificial bait. The worm is employed by means of a large hook capable of holding two or three lob worms. These should be threaded on the hook so that their tails may hang down from the hook, and form a good big bunch or mass of worm-meat. Three or four heavy swan shot or a sinker, equal to the weight of the stream, should be used ; the worm pitched well above the "lie" of the fish, and allowed to travel freely along the bottom. When you have a bite, be not in too great a hurry, as the salmon does not bolt his prey instantly, but give him time, and when you think he has had time to get the bait in his mouth, a sharp, steady, but not too violent, tug will put you *en rapport* with him. Then look out for squalls, and do the best you can with him. The minnow, par-tail, and artificial baits are used, in much the same way as I have already pointed out, for trout. And the natural or artificial prawn, baited on one large hook, and cast and worked by sinking and drawing, is a deadly bait on very many rivers. I once hooked a good fish in the Galway river with the Archimedean minnow, being induced to try it by seeing the small fry flying from the water as though a pike were after them. Usually, however, I do not care to use anything but the fly. On this occasion, however, I had tried it all day futilely, and unquestionably the salmon were feeding on some small fry as I saw them "fly" again and again.

While on this subject I may also say that I have seen salmon feed greedily on the little eels which during "eel fare" run up rivers. These facts, combined with their taking both worms and minnow, when they can get it, quite assure me that the notion that salmon do not feed when in fresh water, which so generally prevails, is extremely incorrect. Salmon do not perhaps feed very voraciously, because in salmon rivers, as a general rule, food, and particularly in the heavy waters salmon inhabit, is not very abundant, and the salmon is not given to roaming about far from home in search of food ; but I very much question if anything passes his lair within eye-shot, which is at all worth his notice, that he does not take stock or toll of.

The spoon is also a capital artificial lure for salmon, and, in trolling upon lakes, is often employed with great success. Otters and crosslines are both means of taking salmon. In

England one is licensed and in Ireland the other, but they are little better than poaching, and the legislature is much to blame for not utterly prohibiting them under severe penalties, as they are hardly inferior to downright leistering in their destructiveness.

SEA TROUT FISHING

Sea trout are of two species: the white trout of Ireland, salmon trout or *Salmo trutta* of England and science, and the grey trout or bull trout of Tweed, Coquet, and elsewhere, or *Salmo eriox*. The bull trout, when it reaches any size, is a bad riser, save when in the condition of a kelt, at which time starvation and emaciation makes him greedy enough. They say there is a time of year, according to tradition, when the bull trout is a very welcome accessory to the table. I will not dispute this, but rest contented by saying that I have not yet discovered the exact day. Yet it is held in high estimation by the French, who pay as much for it as they do for salmon;* but as they eat kelts with a relish and call *them* salmon, one need not be surprised at anything they do in that way. Bull trout are sometimes caught with trout flies, and now and then by minnow and worm. There is a disputed point as regards the bull trout, whether or no he is the veritable "whitling" of the Border when in his grilse state. This I cannot of course decide beyond question, but I am quite sure that I have in the same river caught both the grilse bull trout, and the ordinary white or salmon trout, each of about a pound or a pound and a half in weight, and that the natives called them both whitling, so which is really entitled to the name I do not pretend to say. The flies for both these fish on the Border rivers are the same, and are called whitling flies: they are similar to the ordinary sea-trout and white trout flies used elsewhere. As to the style of fishing there is nothing peculiar or decided in it, for one almost as often catches sea trout with the common trout fly, when trouting, as with the small-sized salmon fly when salmon fishing, or with both as the regular orthodox sea-trout fly.

The white trout is one of the gamest fish that swim. Like a champion of the light-weights, he is all activity: when hooked he is here, there, and everywhere, now up, now down, now in the water and now out; indeed, an hour or two's white trout fishing, when the fish are in the humour, is about as lively and pleasant a sport as the angler can desire; and as salmon trout often take the fly well up to six and seven pounds weight, where they are found of that size, the sport is little inferior to the best grilse-fishing.

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* And so do the English, for that matter; for I have often seen large bull trout sold in the London shops for prime Scotch salmon.—F. F.

As to where they are to be sought, that experience alone will determine, as they abound in many lakes to profusion and take nobly in them. I have myself caught a hundredweight of them in a day in a lake. They are found in most salmon rivers, and in smaller streams which are too shallow for salmon. The smallest mountain beck will often when in spate give good sport. They also take in salt water, and are quite as likely to be found in the mouth of the river as they are in the highest pool up amongst the mountains, for they are great and pertinacious travellers. You may catch them in salmon pools, in dull eddies, and in sharp streams; so I can give no advice which would be of any value on that score.

A double-handed trout rod or a light grilsing weapon will be found the most advisable rod for sport.* The gut should be single, round and sound, and not too coarse, but stouter than you would use for ordinary trouting, and two flies may well be used, as you will often have a fish at each when luck attends you. They take bait as freely as fly, and are the most sporting and game fish which the angler meets with. I append a list of sea-trout flies to the list of salmon flies.

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* Right for fishing a river; but in smaller streams or fishing a lake from a boat a single-handed trout rod is quite effective and less tiring.—Ed.

CHAPTER X

SALMON FLIES

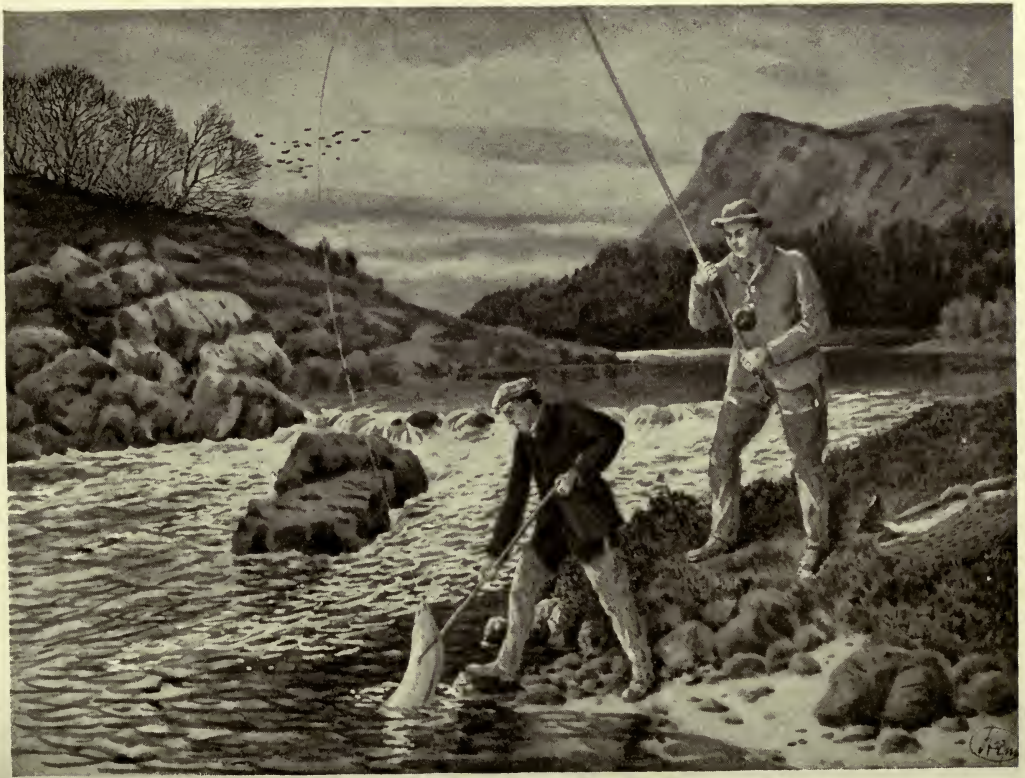
List of Salmon Flies—General Flies—List of Flies for Scotch Rivers

ONE of the most difficult things in tying flies from description is to hit off the right shade of colour. I have done my best to overcome this difficulty in point of description, but, more or less, it must always exist, and the fly tyer must not be angry with me if I find it unable, out of twenty shades of green, for example, to describe in words any particular shade beyond the possibility of a mistake.

The component parts of a salmon fly are variously named by different writers, and I have therefore, to avoid mistakes, at Plate IX, Fig. 8, page 211, given a figure of a salmon fly, in which each part is lettered and named according to the part indicated, as follows:—*a* the tag; *b* the tail; *c* the butt; *d* the tinsel; *e* the body; *f* the hackle; *g* the shoulder hackle; *h* the under wing; *i* the upper wing; *j* the cheek; *k* the head; *l* loop.

I have been many years collecting this list of flies, of the majority of which I have brought patterns away from the rivers themselves, so that they are descriptions of the actual flies used on the rivers by the *habitués* thereof. When these have been collected long since, I have verified them subsequently by reference to old friends and persons still living on the rivers. When I have been able to get them, I have obtained other patterns from well-known fly tyers or professors of the art who dwell on the banks of their favourite streams. Many acts of kindness and liberality have I to be thankful for in this respect, and to all those gentlemen who have lent me any assistance I desire here to offer my very sincerest and warmest thanks. They have assisted in a good and useful work, as the description of the various flies employed for each separate river of any note in the United Kingdom has

PLATE XIV



To face Page 249.]

GAFFING A SALMON.

(From a drawing by Sir Herbert Maxwell, Bt.)

never been brought together in any work before, and indeed I may say never could be by anyone who has not enjoyed the peculiar and favourable facilities which I have for obtaining access to the most strictly preserved waters. There are many persons who hold that half a dozen flies are enough to kill salmon on any river in the kingdom, and who will despise the notion of such an extended list of flies. To such irreverent scoffers and heretical unbelievers I have nothing to say. Let them indulge in their *répertoire* of a bit of old Turkey carpet and a live barn-door rooster. They are, to the artists who attain eminence in the delightful occupation I have endeavoured to illustrate, what the chalker of pavements is to a Landseer. Equally well, no doubt, would they land a salmon if they hooked him with a clothes prop, a jack line, and a meat hook.*

Hooks are varied so much in size, not only by different makers but even by the same makers, and the numbering and lettering becomes so troublesome and complicated, that I have given a scale of Limerick hooks of sizes numbered for reference, as the easiest and simplest mode of expression.†

I have described a number of general flies which are more or less used upon several rivers with success; and these will always, when the angler is unacquainted with the special and pet varieties for the fish of the river he is bent on plundering, form an efficient *corps de reserve*, and amongst them a killer or two will certainly be found.

The Doctor.—This is a very general and deserved favourite. Commencing, then, at the bend of the hook, tie on as a tag three or four turns of fine gold twist. Tail, a single gold pheasant topping, over this a turn of scarlet crewel; body, pale blue floss silk, with hackle a shade or two darker, wound on from tail to head (this is varied at times with blue jay's feather); silver tinsel (in large flies of all kinds the tinsel may be rendered more conspicuous by the addition of some twist wound on beside it). At the shoulder a brown grouse, partridge, or bustard hackle may be wound on; a blue jay is sometimes used over the blue hackle. The wing is a mixed wing, containing fibres of bustard, dark turkey, argus pheasant, and claret, blue, and yellow fibres of stained swan feathers, the latter predominating. In smaller flies mallard and pintail are introduced. The head is of scarlet crewel. This fly is dressed upon any sized hook, from about No. 6 to No. 10, to suit the water. (Plate XIX, Fig. 1.) p. 279.

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* Reference to the above paragraph has been made in the introduction to this edition.—Ed.

† Unluckily Mr. Francis's scale has never been adopted as the standard; so the scale followed by Messrs. Alcock is given on Plate XXIII.—Ed.

page 345

The Silver Doctor is also a good standard fly. Tag, silver tinsel ; tail, gold pheasant topping, a turn of red crewel over the stump of it for the butt ; body, silver tinsel ; hackle blue, as before, with a brown hackle at the shoulder, and a small speckled gallina over it ; wing, chiefly of pintail, with a few red and blue fibres, and two toppings over it ; red crewel head. And a very pretty showy fly it makes. Size as before.

Having finished with the medical profession, we now turn to the army, and produce

The Colonel.—There are two uniforms which the Colonel rejoices in ; the one a bright gold or yellow, and the other a red gold, or orange. Tag, gold twist and two turns of bright yellow floss ; tail, red and yellow sprigs mixed with gallina, and a topping ; no butt ; body, yellow floss half-way up, and then orange pig's wool ; over this is ribbed side by side, gold twist and tinsel and black floss (a bit of unravelled coarse sewing silk does better)—first the twist, then the tinsel, then the black silk ; yellow hackle from tail to head, bustard hackle at shoulder ; under wing gold pheasant tippet, two feathers shortish ; on either side of these strips of bustard and argus pheasant (the dark small speckled feather) ; fibres of yellow thrown in here and there, and over all a topping with blue macaw ribs ; black head. For the orange variety read orange for yellow. Size various, from about No. 4 to 8.

The Major.—Tag, silver twist and ruby floss ; tail, fibres of bustard hackle, tippet and a topping ; body composite, viz. two turns of medium blue, ditto of dark orange, about four or five of bright claret, and two more of blue pig's wool, over this silver tinsel and gold twist side by side ; a red claret hackle, commencing from the orange wool ; the blue wool picked out in longish fibres at the shoulder, over this a bustard hackle, then the wing, and over that a yellow hackle. The wing is composed of a white ribbed snipe's feather, with longish tippet on either side, over this bustard and gold pheasant tail in strips, with red, blue, and greenish yellow fibres, and over all topping ; black head. It is a capital fly, but I think some of the dressing is rather overdone and might be dispensed with. Size same as the last.

Following up the military lead, we come to the Rangers.

The Black Ranger.—Tag, silver twist and golden floss ; tail, the bright red breast feather of Indian crow and a topping; butt, two turns of black ostrich; body, two or three turns of golden floss, ditto of bright fiery-red pig's wool, and the remainder of the body of black; silver tinsel and twist; very dark blue hackle, extending from the red mohair; black hackle at shoulder; wing, a pair of long jungle cock feathers, a trifle longer than the hook; doubled* tippet feathers over them; topping over all, blue macaw ribs, and kingfisher at the cheeks. Plate XVIII, Fig. 1.)

The Blue Ranger.—Tag, silver twist and gold-coloured floss; tail as before; butt, black ostrich; body, gold-coloured floss and fiery-red wool as before; light blue pig wool for the rest of the body; blue hackle, a shade darker from almost the middle of the wool to the shoulder, gallina hackle over; silver tinsel and twist; wing, a pair of tippets; double jungle cock over them; topping over all; black head. Both these flies, as regards size, to follow the colonel's lead. We will now leave the military and go into the church.

The Parson.—This is a very showy fly, and is used chiefly on the Erne, but it is a capital fly anywhere where a showy fly is required. It is on the Erne rather a generic name for a series of flies than for any special one, as we have there, green parsons, and blue parsons, and golden parsons, and so on. The parson being merely significant of plenty of toppings in the wing. The Golden Parson, however, is my idea of the fly, and this I will describe.

Tag, silver tinsel and mauve floss; tail, two toppings, a few sprigs of tippet and a kingfisher; body, two turns of golden floss silk, then golden pig's wool, merging into orange; golden orange hackle over the wool, red orange hackle over that, and two or three or more short toppings tied in at the breast, instead of shoulder hackle; wing, a tippet feather with a cock of the rock (not the squared feather) on either side, and one above, strips of pintail or wood duck on either side, and as many toppings as you can pile on—seven or eight or more if you like. These are often tied on with the turn bent inwards at Ballyshannon, and it gives them more play in the water. Kingfisher's feathers on either cheek, and blue macaw ribs; black head. This, however, is decidedly a topping parson, a sort of bishop or archbishop parson, in fact, and not for every-day use; we only bring him out when the feelings of the salmon, having resisted all ordinary persuasiveness, require to be very strongly appealed to. But if you substitute a golden olive hackle, with a medium claret above that, and blue jay at shoulder, and reduce the number of toppings, and tie into the wing a couple of gold pheasant saddle feathers over the tippet feather, a capital working parson, a sort of curate, is produced, fit for hard every-day work.

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* Doubled feathers mean where a short feather is laid on over and beside a long one of the same kind.—F. F.

We now come to the *bourgeois*, and begin with one whose very name is ensanguined.

The Butcher (Farlow's).—This is a very general favourite; it kills almost wherever there are salmon. In the Awe, the Orchy, the Brora, the Naver, the Thurso, the Helmsdale, the Annan, and the Taw and Torridge, it is a prime favourite. Tag, gold twist and dark orange floss; tail, one topping; butt, black ostrich herl; body, two or three turns of claret, ditto of medium blue, ditto of red, and the rest of dark blue pig's wool; broad silver tinsel; medium red claret hackle, gallina on shoulder; under wing, a tippet and gold pheasant rump feather, over them strips of brown mallard, bustard, peacock, wood duck, and blue and yellow swan strips; black head. (Frontispiece, Fig. 6.)

Here is another plan of dressing the fly sent me by a friend, who is a very skilful brother of the craft, being no less than the gentleman who writes those pleasant chatty articles in *Bell's Life*, under the *nom de plume* of "Fin." I give his own directions. Mixed wing, rich long jungle cock feathers over; body, claret, blue, and orange pig's wool; three turns of broad silver twist; dark claret hackle at shoulder, light claret to the tail; small kingfisher feather on each shoulder; tail, topping and wood duck; and he adds, "I've killed lots of fish with this fly." As poor Pat McKay used to say, "Av coorse ye have, megorra! why wouldn't ye?"

The Baker (Farlow's) is another good general fly; dressed small it is a standard fly on the Dovey. Tag, gold twist and lightish blue floss; tail, a topping; butt, black herl; body, three turns of golden-coloured floss, dark orange, light blue, and red pig's wool, broadish gold tinsel; medium red claret hackle, gallina at shoulder, with light blue over it; under wing, two tippet feathers, sprigs of gold pheasant tail, bustard, peacock, red, bright green, and blue and yellow sprigs of swan over; blue macaw ribs; black head.

Having given the butcher and baker, the trades will not be complete without

The Candlestick Maker.—This is a fly to light the salmon to bed with. I dressed one as a whim some years since, and sent it to a friend, who reported favourably of it to me; since then it has done useful service. The body, for the lower half, is black silk; the upper, black pig's wool, very bushy towards the shoulder, and picked out at the breast; hackle, golden-olive, with claret at the shoulder; tinsel, broad silver; tail, scarlet ibis, and wood duck; wing, five or six toppings with doubled jungle cock on either side. At dusk, this fly will often show the salmon the way upstairs, when others will fail.

The Childers (Farlow's).—This is another excellent general fly. It is a slaughterer on the Thurso, the Naver, the Helmsdale, and the Brora. Tag, gold twist and golden-coloured floss; tail, a topping, some teal, and tippet; body, yellow, orange, and dark red (somewhat of a lake) pig's wool, broad gold tinsel; hackle, dark red claret and light blue on the shoulder; wing, a good lump of whitish tipped dark turkey, and strips of bustard, and gold pheasant tail over it, mixed with slices of blue, pale red, orange, and yellow swan; head, black.

The last four flies are dressed of various sizes to suit the water.

*The Claret.**—Tag, gold twist and gold floss; tail, a topping, and slips of blue and red macaw; butt, black ostrich, two turns; body, three of orange floss, medium reddish claret pig's wool, stoutish gold thread, a light reddish claret hackle, commencing about half-way down the body, with a couple of turns of black hackle at shoulder; under wing, a tippet feather, and over it mixed fibres of gold pheasant tail, turkey, bustard, and peacock, fibres of green and red parrot thrown in, ribs, blue macaw, and one topping over all; black head. This fly may be varied by varying the shade of the claret, which may be from light red to dark purple claret, the wing being sobered down as the fly is made darker. It is a very useful fly, and a general favourite. It may be made of almost any size from 4 to 10, or 11 even. It is good for sea trout.

The Guinea Hen.—This is a specimen of a trimmed fly; i.e. the hackle is trimmed or clipped on the breast, whilst it is left long and full on the back in order to form a part of the wing. In the illustration it might with advantage be trimmed a little closer on the breast. Tag, orange floss; tail, a topping; body, medium blue floss; hackle, guinea hen (small speckled), laid on pretty thick and trimmed off on the breast: silver twist; wings, gold pheasant tail, and tippet, mixed fibres with guinea hen and teal and yellow fibres; blue macaw ribs; head, peacock herl. Size, 6, 7, and 8. A useful fly; varies nicely by dyeing the hackle yellow.

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* I call this a claret. I hardly know what would be the proper term. Some might call it a fiery brown, but having the fate of Martin Kelly before me, I eschew Fiery Browns. To my view of the case there are two clarets, one in which the red tinge, and the other in which the blue or purple predominate. I shall endeavour to distinguish them thus.—F. F.

Black and Teal.—Tag, silver twist and golden floss; tail, one topping; butt, black herl; body, two turns of orange floss, the rest black (either floss, horsehair, mohair, or unlaid sewing silk), in large flies fur is often used; broadish silver tinsel; black hackle over three parts of the body; gallina (the dark feather with the large round spots, not the small speckled grey) on the shoulder; wing, double jungle cock with topping over them, and two good-sized teal, or the small feather of the black partridge, one on either shoulder to form a body to the wing; head, gold thread. This is my own pattern of dressing this fly, and a very good one I consider it to be. The fly is a first-rate general fly, and should be kept of all sizes, as it will kill large lake and river trout or sea trout, as well as salmon, if regulated in size. The smaller patterns may be made with single jungle cock feathers, a trifle more teal being added. It is one of the best flies that can be used on the Spey. Some persons, however, dress it purely with a teal wing; it is good anyhow. (Plate XVIII, Fig. 4.)

The Namsen.—There is not a prettier body made than the Namsen boasts of. It is a great favourite of mine. Tag, silver twist; tail, one topping, some red parrot, and pintail sprigs; body roughish, two turns of bright yellow pig's wool merged into deep orange, and that into medium red claret, and that again into bright medium (or inclining to darkish) blue; the upper part of the claret and the blue tied in roughly for picking out, the blue the longest, of course; silver tinsel with gold thread beside it; longish black hackle on shoulder; wing, slips of dark turkey, bright bustard, English bustard, red, blue, and greenish-yellow dyed swan; head black. Size from 4 or 5 to 9 or 10.

The Popham.—This is a peculiar species of fly, and in the interest of the fly tyer, I have given a cut of it (Frontispiece, Fig. 1). It kills upon two or three rivers in the North, I believe, on the Ness and the Brora, and occasionally elsewhere. It never was a great favourite of mine, being a very troublesome fly to tie. It is, however, an established favourite with some anglers, and therefore I describe it. Tag, gold twist; tail, a topping, two turns of peacock herl over it. The body is in three joints; the lowest is yellow, the middle one blue, and the upper one orange floss. At every joint there is a turn or two of peacock herl, and tied in instead of a hackle, and pointing downwards like a hackle are three or four of the small red feathers in the breast of the Indian crow. Fine gold twist; blue jay, hackled at shoulder; mixed wing, fibres of gold pheasant tail and tippet, bustard, teal, blue, yellow, and claret-dyed sawn, and a topping over all; peacock herl head. Size, from 7 to 11.

The Britannia.—This is a very rich fly, but it is a tried accepted favourite upon many rivers. It kills well on the Thurso, to which river, by the way, I first introduced it several years ago. I had very good sport with it there. The tag, gold twist; tail, a good-sized topping, a bit of scarlet ibis and fibres of bright bastard bustard; body, two or three turns of bright golden floss, and then bright orange pig's wool, gold tinsel, and silver twist; bright red claret hackle; bustard or wood duck hackle over that, and dark blue or green hackle on shoulder, or rather as a ruff over the wing; under wing, a couple of shovel duck feathers, with from three to five toppings over it; two short jungle cock on either shoulder, and two shorter still kingfisher just below them at cheek; head, gold thread. A very warm gorgeous-looking fly. By using a dark orange or a red-brown hackle, the warmth of the fly may be toned down. The green shoulder-hackled fly is my favourite. Size, 4, 5, or 6.

The Goldfinch.—This fly is the handsomest and neatest specimen of a showy salmon fly I know of. Tag, gold tinsel and black floss; tail, a topping; body, gold coloured floss, hackle pale yellow, blue jay at shoulder; gold tinsel; wing, composed entirely of toppings; red macaw ribs, and black head. Size 5 to 7.

TWEED FLIES

Few rivers are so varied in their character as the Tweed, which comprises in its length every kind of water—rapid, dub, stream, fall, etc. The lower part of the salmon-fishing is mostly boat-fishing; higher up it can be fished a good deal from the shore. The waters or holdings are not generally extensive, being very valuable, and fetching high rents. The flies are not large, and the sport runs from May to November. For closer information see a capital little work by Younger, published by Rutherford, of Kelso, wherein every water and cast on the Tweed is named and described.

The Durham Ranger.—This is a favourite pattern on the Tweed, but it is like most of the Tweed flies, good anywhere. Tag, silver tinsel and gold floss; tail, one topping; butt, two turns of black herl; body, two turns of light orange floss, then two of dark orange, of claret, and black pig's wool, respectively—according to the size of the fly the turns may of course be increased or lessened; the black wool to be picked out at the breast. Over the whole of the wool a coch y bondu hackle (red with black centre), stained a bright red-orange, two turns of black hackle over it, and a light blue hackle on the shoulder; wing, a pair of longish jungle cock in centre, doubled tippets on either side, one topping over all; blue macaw ribs and a kingfisher feather on either cheek.

Jock Scott.—Another good Tweed pattern, which is very useful elsewhere. Tag, gold twist; tail, one topping and one Indian crow feather; body, in two joints, gold-coloured floss the lowest, and black floss the upper; from the joint is tied, after the fashion of the Popham, two or three short toucan points, and over the butts of them, at the joint, two turns of black herl; silver twist, a black hackle over the black joint, and speckled gallina at shoulder; wing mixed, a white tip turkey slip in the middle, fibres of pintail, or teal, bustard, brown mallard, yellow, red, and green parrot, one topping over all, blue macaw ribs, a kingfisher on either cheek. Any size to suit the water, from 6 to 10 or 11. (Frontispiece, Fig. 2.)

The Dun Wing.—Another capital Tweed favourite, which is a pretty general one also. Tail, one topping and sprigs of tippet; body, light orange, red-claret, darkish blue and black pig's wool in about equal portions merging into each other; broadish silver tinsel; black hackle down to the red wool, a few fibres of the blue wool picked out at the breast; wings, two strips from the dun brown feather sometimes found in the tail of a turkey. This fly is a special favourite on the Kirkcudbrightshire Dee, the Annan, and Nith; and, dressed on a long large hook, it is good on the Tay and many other streams besides. Size from 5 or 6 to 9 or 10. (Frontispiece, Fig. 5.)

The Drake Wing.—This is another good Tweed fly, and a fair general favourite also. Tail, tippet sprigs, and a yellow toucan feather; body, orange, red, and black pig's wool, the red being about two-fifths and the black three-fifths of the body; broadish silver tinsel; hackle, a coch y bondu hackle, stained a dark orange-red, the black part being left on for the shoulders, and over this a lavender hackle; wing, two strips of pintail. Any size from 6 to 11.

The small edition of this, used in the summer, is called the *Teal Wing*.

White Wing.—This fly I have never seen save on the Tweed. It is a capital fly for the evening there, however, and kills well. Tail, one topping, and a bit of tippet; body, one turn of yellow, one of orange, two of claret, and the rest of black pig's wool; broad silver tinsel; black hackle from tail to head; light blue hackle on shoulders; two slips of white swan for wings. Size, 4, 5, or 6.

The White Tip.—This fly is like the last in every particular, save that there is no orange in the body, and the wings are two slips of the feather from a wild duck's wing with white tip and butt, and black in the middle. Size from 5 to 8.

The Toppy.—A noted old Tweed fly, and a perfect specimen of the simplest form of salmon fly. Tag, ruby floss; tail. a tuft of yellow mohair; body, black pig's wool; fine silver tinsel; two turns of red hackle next the tail, black hackle for the rest of the fly; wings, two strips of dark turkey tipped with white; head, red mohair. Size from 5 to 8.

Kate.—This is a comparatively new fly on the Tweed, but it kills well there. I have not seen it tried elsewhere, but I think the pattern is so likely that I see no reason why it should not do well on other waters. Tag, silver tinsel and light yellow floss; tail, a topping with short kingfisher feather; body, ruby floss, two or three turns, and darkish red pig's wool picked out at breast; orange hackle at shoulder, silver twist; light mixed wing, tippet sprigs, black partridge (or pintail, if the fibres be not long enough), bustard, wood duck, mallard, blue, red, green and yellow sprigs, one topping over all, jungle cock at shoulders, blue macaw ribs; black head. Size from about 7 to 11.

The Blue Doctor (p. 249) is also a favourite fly on the Tweed; so is the *Silver Doctor*, but they vary the dressing, giving it a black head and butt instead of red; a silver-grey cuckoo dun hackle instead of blue, with teal at the shoulder.* The wing is made somewhat greyer by an admixture of mallard, wood-duck, and bustard, and a few sprigs of gold pheasant tail. Size from 6 to 10.

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* Tweed fishers have reverted to the red head and butt, and the blue hackle.—ED.

The Black and Yellow is another capital fly, a first-rate general evening fly too anywhere. Tag, silver twist and orange floss; tail, a topping or two according to size of fly; black ostrich butt; black silk body; black hackle; silver tinsel (if large fly twist with it); light blue hackle on shoulder; wing, red feather of gold pheasant rump, the remainder of the wing composed of toppings according to the size and requirement of the fly, from three to seven or eight probably, kingfisher cheeks and blue macaw ribs; black head. Size from 6 to 10 or 11.

The Golden Mallard (I never heard a name for this fly, so I have christened it).—It is a capital fly, and will kill elsewhere than the Tweed. Tag, gold twist; tail, one topping and kingfisher; body, gold tinsel, gold twist ribbed over it; stained blood-red coch y bondu hackle at shoulder; and brown mallard wings, blue macaw ribs; black head. Size as in the last.

Some of the Tay flies, particularly the Wasps dressed small, will kill well in the Tweed. The above patterns are nearly all from the *répertoire* of my old acquaintance, James Wright, of Sprouston, a first-rate artist. Beloe, of Coldstream, and Forrest, of Kelso, are also excellent furnishers of angling requisites. Forrest has a high name as a salmon-rod maker,* and Beloe is celebrated for his trout flies. For a salmon fly, however, James has deservedly "the call" on Tweedside, and, in fact, for all the south of Scotland.† Tweed flies range in size from medium-sized salmon down to sea trout size. The latter are tied on double hooks, which are very effective.

THE KIRKCUDBRIGHTSHIRE DEE

The Cree flies given below will also kill on the Dee, as will the dun wing Tweed flies; but the favourite fly given to me by Mr. Laurie, of Laurieston, an old resident and renter of fishing in that river, is: tail, a small topping; body, two turns of yellow, and the rest of black pig's wool; silver tinsel, black hackle, and two slips of good red gled for wings. The flies are not large, the ordinary grilse size and smaller.

Mr. Herbert Maxwell, of Monreith, has, since the publication of the last edition, sent me an account of the Galloway rivers, with patterns of flies, and his remarks are so clear and to the purpose that I append them.

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* And retains it to this day.—Ed.

† James Wright is now no more, alas!—Ed.

THE CREE AND ITS TRIBUTARY THE MINNICK

" These are both good spring rivers (this week last year, in one day, Captain Colvin Stewart had nine clean fish—four rods eighteen fish).

" Flies :—

" No. I. Tail a small topping and tuft of red parrot ; body, yellow-orange merging into scarlet and claret for half the body ; the upper half black pig's wool, dressed roughish ; hackle brown-red, with plenty of black hackle on shoulder ; thin gold tinsel doubled ; wing, turkey dun with light tips.

" No. 2. Tail and body and tinsel as before ; lower hackle as before, shoulder hackle lightish medium blue ; wing, slips of brown mallard.

" No. 3. Tail and tinsel as before ; body dark cinnamon-brown (darker than cinnamon) ; hackle the same shade, shoulder hackle black ; wing brown mallard.

" These are the standard flies, sizes from 8 to 12 in your Limerick scale. They are varied, and, I think, improved by a topping over, or small tippet feather under the wing. The fish are numerous but small, most weigh about ten pounds. The Butchers and Doctors kill well, and small dark clarets.

THE BLADENOCH

" A fair spring river, but at no season so good as the Cree, as the fish are very shy. The same flies will kill well-dressed larger, but the favourite is the dun wing, as dressed by Wright, of Sprouston (see Tweed, p. 256). Sizes from 4 to 6 in spring down to 9 or 10 in summer. The Butcher (p. 252) is a prime favourite also for spring.

THE LUCE

" This is a late river, but the fish run far heavier than in either of the others, a twenty-pound fish being by no means a rarity. My favourite fly is dressed as follows.

" Tag, gold tinsel, tail red parrot, teal, and yellow macaw ; body, yellow, orange, scarlet and claret pig's wool, dressed spare ; gold thread double ; grouse hackle on shoulder ; wings, red wild turkey, one topping over, hook 6 to 10.

" Another good one is a claret body, with blue hackle on shoulder, grey mallard wing, or teal for small sizes.

"The following eccentricity is reckoned excellent as a change, and I know it does good work.

"Tag, gold tinsel; tail, topping; body, half yellow, half pea-green pig's wool, dressed spare; gold tinsel; green hackle over green pig's wool; grouse at shoulder; wings, brown mallard; between which a bright blue hackle; over them one topping; head, black ostrich. Hook 8 to 9. About as ugly a fly as you will find.

"The upper waters of the Cree and the Minnick are protected, but the lower and better part is netted. The Bladenoch is preserved by an association, but the Luce is terribly netted; the fish slaps are sometimes built up, and in short a general state of neglect and ignorance of what is law prevails. As to the stake netting in the Solway, into which these rivers debouch, I need not tell *you* that the Scotch shore fairly bristle with nets; it is a marvel fish get through and up at all.

"There are other streams in Ayrshire and up the West coast, which have their peculiar flies, but were you to notice all the rivers, your book would swell to two or three volumes on salmon alone, which I presume is not your intention.

"HERBERT MAXWELL."

Mr. Maxwell very kindly subsequently sent me the following:—

"Add to the Minnick flies for a low bright water the following, known as the "Dusty Miller."

"Tag, silver tinsel, dark olive floss; tail, one topping; butt, black ostrich; body, embossed silver timsel, gold thread; dark olive hackle, gallina at shoulder; wing, gold pheasant tail, mallard, teal, green parrot and lavender swan, jungle cock at cheek; head black. Hook 9 to 11. (Plate XIX, Fig. 2.)

THE AYRSHIRE STINCHAR

"Is a fine water; if the nets were off, I doubt not it would be the best in the West. The nets are, I believe, to be regulated in future, by the proprietor, Lord Stair, a keen fisher. I have never fished it, but he told me the other day he had four fish, weight seventy-six pounds. Large Dee flies are used there, and a curious dun turkey, with a second pair of wings half-way down the body."*

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* The plan is common on the Tay, and is employed when very long hooks are used, and when the fly dresser has not any feathers by him long enough in the fibre to make the wing. He then takes two short fibres, and by allowing one to overlap the other the requisite effect is produced.—F. F.

Mr. J. Dalrymple Hay also sent me patterns and descriptions of flies in the Luce, but the only one which Mr. Maxwell had not already sent, is thus described :—

Drake wing * (light), red and black body, with brown hackle, and Mr. Hay adds, " I have seen a jungle cock feather do well in heavy water late in the season."

THE ANNAN AND NITH

The following four patterns for the Annan were sent me since the first edition of this work was published, by Mr. Rowell, the fishing-tackle maker of St. Alban's Row, Carlisle, who is the purveyor of all angling requisites for that district. They are nicely tied, and look decidedly bloodthirsty.

No. 1 Tag, silver twist ; tail, some sprigs from the saddle feathers of gold pheasant ; body very rough pig's wool, a sort of orange-brown at tail, merging into more and more brown, until it is dark bear's-brown at shoulder ; coch y bondu hackle, with plenty of black at the butt ; for the shoulder medium gold tinsel ; wings, two slips of grey drake under, and two of light dun turkey over.

No. 2 is very much the same, only the body is a trifle yellower at the tail ; the tail is made of tippet sprigs, and the body is not so deep a brown at the shoulders. The under wing is of peacock, not too bright, and the upper of dark dun turkey.

No. 3. Tail and hackle, as in No. 1 ; body, bright medium brown throughout ; wing, peacock brownish at the butt. All these flies are rough, and well picked out with medium fine gold twist, the hooks being 7 and 8.

No. 4 is a floss silk body ; tag, gold tinsel ; tail, black partridge or teal, and some saddle feather ; butt, black ostrich ; body lower half yellow, inclining to orange, upper half dark medium blue ; hackle coch y bondu, blue jay at shoulder ; silver tinsel ; wing mixed pintail and teal ; tippet (dyed red) a sword feather, slips of claret and orange swan, with a good deal of golden pheasant tail over all. Hook No. 5. No heads to these flies.

And I had a note from Mr. Maxwell with respect to the Annan and Nith, from which I extract the following :—

" Captain Stewart tells me that he always uses the different varieties of dun and white tip turkey and brown mallard as dressed by Jamie Wright, of Sprouston (see Tweed flies), that

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* Pintail, or the lighter mallard feathers.—F. F.

prince of dressers for Scottish waters. Also the Butcher (p. 252), and a fly dressed as follows:—Tag, silver tinsel; tail, one topping and red Indian crow, or tuft of floss silk; body, half lemon yellow, half black mohair or pig's wool, according to size of fly; coch y bondu hackle, with black at shoulder; mixed wing, of mallard, teal, yellow and lavender swan, and plenty of red macaw, with or without small tippet under, and topping over wing; head, black herl.

"But the speciality of both these waters is the dun wing, size from 6 to 12, according to the season."

THE ABERDEENSHIRE DEE

There are many Dees in the kingdom, two noted ones in Scotland, and one famous river in England and Wales. That which I here refer to is the chief one, or the Aberdeenshire Dee. It is almost a pattern river for the skilful salmon-fisher, but will not admit of being fished by a muff; in fact, it is by no means an easy river to fish. The lower reaches, as on the Conon, are not good rising ground, as the salmon run through and rise badly while resting—the Aboyne water perhaps being the cream of the Dee.* The casts are rapid rough streams and often heavy, but it is perhaps one of the clearest streams in Scotland. The flies used are peculiar, and the local ones are of little use on any other river in Scotland, save, perhaps, a small size of the Gled Wing, or the Tartan, which may be used for the Don. The flies are usually large,† but slenderly dressed, being meant to catch the salmon's eye, I presume, in the deep rough water, which a small fly would not, and not to frighten him, which too gross (*grosse*) an imposition perhaps might do. Some of the flies used, as the Eagle (local "aigle"; and here I may say that the Aberdeenshire dialect is the worst and most non-understandable to a stranger of any in Scotland; for, though tolerably experienced, I never could understand half my gillies said when they were conversationally inclined during my visits there)—I say, the "aigle" is little more marvellous as a fly than the dialect is as a dialect, and if we might liken some flies to shrimps and prawns, and others to butterflies and

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* This does not agree with my experience. If I had my choice of the whole river, I would take the Cairnton or the Woodside water, and excellent sport is often had lower down on the Park and Durris waters. But the Dee is a long river and much depends upon where the early fish rest first after leaving the sea.—Ed.

† For spring fishing; but in summer exceedingly small flies are used.—Ed.

PLATE XV.

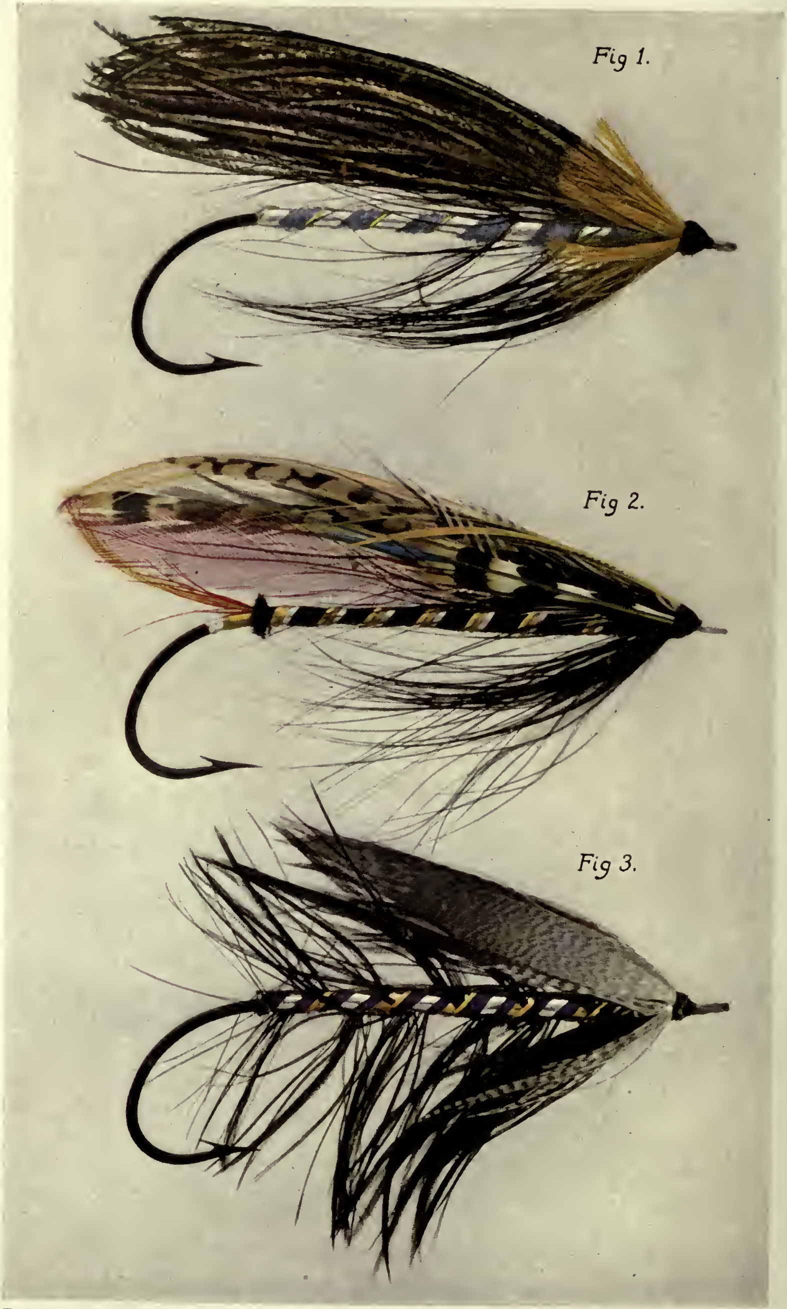


Fig 1.
Fig 2.
Fig 3.

To face Page 263

SALMON FLIES.

1. The Beauly Snow Fly.
2. The Black Dog.
3. The Purple King.

dragon-flies, the Eagle completely knocks all such possibilities on the head, as it is like nothing on, over, or under the earth. The Dee flies are dressed upon hooks specially made for them: these are very long in the shank, with the Limerick bend. The large class of flies run from about No. 2 in the given scale, down to No. 6, but with this condition: the shank of the hook which represents the No. 2 *size of bend* is just an inch longer for the Dee flies, while that of No. 6 is an inch and a half, the intermediate ones being of proportionate length. For smaller flies, ordinary Limerick hooks are used, even down to an ordinary No. 7. or 8 hook.

The Gled Wing or *Red Wing*, as it is termed, is perhaps the most useful of the local flies. Tag, silver tinsel; tail, gold pheasant saddle; body, one-third orange-yellow, and two-thirds claret, or light purple claret mohair, dressed very sparely; broadish silver tinsel laid on rather thinly and in long spirals; black heron's hackle of the largest size, or two if one will not go far enough, dressed down to the yellow mohair. They must be of the longest fibre, the longer the better; teal hackle on the shoulder, without which no Dee fly is thought complete; wings, two good strips of swallow-tailed gled of the largest fibre, or of red dun turkey of the like colour. Of course, these feathers must be of thin substance and fine in the fibre, to give them play, and they are to be set apart—a rather nice operation to do neatly, the strips requiring to be carefully prepared first by tying in at the extreme butt; no head, as it is thought to cause a ripple, while the sharp head of the regular Dee fly cuts the water with a smooth even gliding motion, opening and shutting its large fibres with most life-like appearance.

The Tartan (Plate XVII, Fig. 2, p. 269) is a strange-looking fly and is rather a troublesome fly to dress. Tag, gold tinsel; tail, gold pheasant rump; body, half orange and half scarlet-red mohair laid on sparely, of course; broadish gold tinsel also spare; hackle, first a stripped sandy-red cock's hackle (that is, only one side of it to be used, the other being stripped off), and on top of this, the large blue-grey hackle or feather from the heron's back and rump; the larger the better, they cannot be too large, as when the hackle is laid on, the fibres are expected to extend from the very head to the farthest bend of the hook. It is an awkward feather to lay on, as are all heron's hackles, being very delicate. It should be tied in, to commence from as low down as it can be conveniently tied, so as to leave enough for a good thick brush from the head. If in winding on the hackle, any of the red hackle fibres under it be wound in, they must be picked out afterwards with the needle, and put in their proper position. At the shoulder, a teal hackle of course. Wings, two strips of silver-grey mottled turkey (the small mottled feather); these feathers are not easy to get. When this fly is finished, and before it is properly pressed down into shape, it looks like an enormous spider, or daddy longlegs; it certainly is a monstrosity, though, after all, not such a monstrosity as

The Eagle.—There are two Eagles, the grey and yellow. The yellow is simply the same feather as the grey, only dyed of a bright canary yellow; indeed, I believe, in the evening, the "yalley aigle" is the favourite, and is the more effective fly of the two. The tail, body, etc., are precisely similar to those of the gled wing; a quantity of the down or fluffy part of the golden eagle's feather—the part on and above the thigh is, I fancy, the best—is then wound on like a hackle, till the fly looks like the butt end of a largish eagle's feather itself; on the shoulder is of course the invariable teal hackle; wings, two broadish strips of silver grey turkey; the large mottled or broad striped and banded feather being selected.

The above are local flies, but a claret body and hackle, with mixed wings of long brown turkey, argus, and bustard feathers, with a gold pheasant sword feather in the midst, does well also, as does the black body and silver tinsel, with gallina shoulder and mixed wing.

Most of these flies are from Mr. Brown's patterns, the well-known tackle maker of Aberdeen, the inventor of the phantom minnow. He dresses them as few others can.

THE DON

The Don debouches a very short distance from the Dee, but no two rivers can well be more dissimilar. The Dee running through the wildest moorland and mountain scenery, and having no trout in it worth notice, and the Don running through beautiful pastoral and well tilled districts, and looking more like a Hampshire than a Highland salmon stream, and containing perhaps as fine trout as any river in Scotland. Yet the salmon seem to like very similar flies; a small reduction in point of size being made. The Don flies are not so large as those for the Aberdeen Dee, though after the same fashion.

Fig 1.

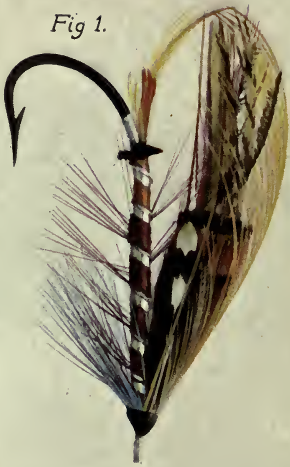


Fig 2.

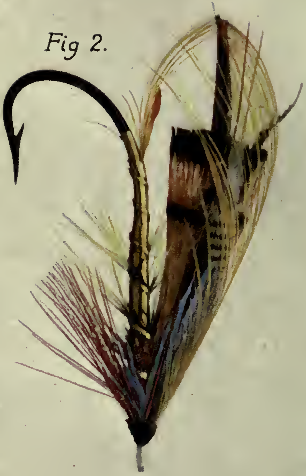


Fig 3.

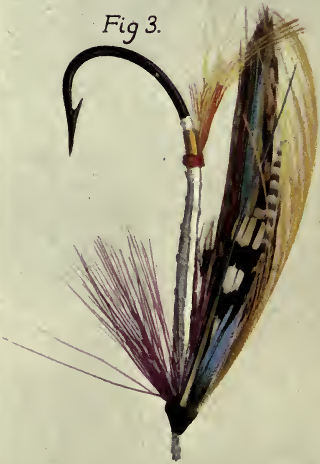
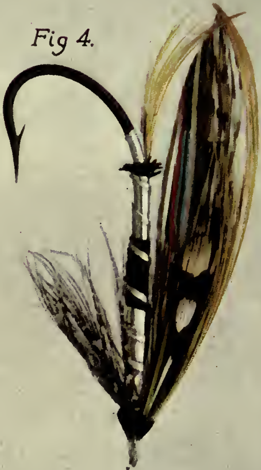


Fig 4.



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SALMON FLIES.

1. The Gordon.
2. The Sir Herbert.
3. The Wilkinson.
4. The Mar Lodge.

Indeed, smallish Dee flies are fair sized Don flies; and, as on the Dee, the Gled Wings and Tartans are standard flies on Don, and are varied by using brown or grey mallard wings. Beyond these are—

No. 1. Tag, silver tinsel; tail, a few fibres of gold pheasant's rump and a small tuft of yellow crewel; butt, black ostrich herl; body, black pig's wool; silver twist; hackle, black with bule jay on shoulder; wings, gled or dun turkey strips. Size 7 to 10.

No. 2. Tag, tail, and butt as before; body, about two-fifths dark red and three-fifths dark blue pig; hackle (only at shoulder) light blue, and over it a short grouse hackle; wings, strips of the red of dun turkey feather speckled with black. Size 7 to 10.

No. 3. Tag gold tinsel; tail, a tuft of orange crewel; body, two-thirds orange and one-third black pig; narrow gold tinsel; hackle (only half-way down), a large coch y bondu hackle, with well marked centre; wings, strips of grey mallard with brownish points. Size 9 to 11.

No. 4. Tail, a few fibres of gold pheasant rump; body half yellow and half medium red pig's wool; gold twist; hackle only half-way down, a small black heron's hackle, just long enough in the fibre to cover the point, and barb; wings, grey mallard as before, with a trifle more brown at the tip. Size 9 to 11.

No. 5. Tail, a small topping; body, purple claret pig's wool; silver twist; hackle, black heron dressed spare, and only on the shoulder, but longer in the fibre than the bend of the hook; wings, two strips of gled or red turkey.

No. 6. Tag, gold tinsel; tail, a small bit of topping; body, brown-orange mohair; gold tinsel; blue heron's hackle, fibres to extend to about the bend of the hook; wings, two strips of bright speckled grey turkey. Size 9 to 11. Patterns from Mr. Brown, of Aberdeen.

THE DEVERON

Nos. 3, 4, 5 and 6 of the Don flies last described are standard patterns also for the Deveron. Patterns from Mr. Brown.

THE NESS

The Ness is a large and heavy river issuing from a very large lake, Loch Ness, which is fed by several good salmon streams, of which the Garry is perhaps the most noteworthy.

The Garry is an excellent early spring river, whereas the Ness, through which all the Garry fish run, is but an indifferent one. The Ness is a fair summer river, and also gives plenty of grilse and large sea trout to the rod—later on, the salmon run of the largest size. The streams and pools on the Ness are remarkably fine and bold. The casts are mostly fished from a boat, though, in places, they can be fished from the shore.

For so large a river as the Ness, the flies used are very small. One of the best killers, which I found to answer on the Ness better than any fly I could dress or obtain, was an old Thurso pattern which I obtained from Mr. Dunbar years ago. I had three of them, and they had lain in my book for years without being used ; but if you keep a fly long enough, it is sure to come in useful at last. Johnnie Macdonald "joost liked the look o' 'em," and I joost took Johnnie's "adveece," and I did well with them when I distinctly failed with other flies. They had been dressed small, I conclude for very young and late patterns, if they were meant for the Thurso.

No. 1. Tag, silver tinsel and orange floss ; tail, a topping and tippet sprigs ; but, pale blue ostrich herl ; body, two turns of light blue-green floss ; yellowish olive-green pig's wool, with a bit of orange at shoulder ; silver tinsel ; bright claret hackle ; wing, a tippet and saddle feather, gold pheasant tail, and a good bit of wood-duck on either side.

No. 2. Tag, silver tinsel, lemon floss ; tail, one topping ; body, yellow one-third, the rest dark red (almost claret) pig's wool ; silver tinsel ; medium blue mohair tied on in locks at the shoulder for hackle, grouse hackle over it ; under wing, a small tippet feather, over, strips of bustard, peacock, pintail, and dark orange-yellow swan. A very good fly.

No. 3. *The Denison* is said to kill well at times there, and as the Speaker's brother, who is the godfather to it, is a very successful fisherman there, we may conclude that the information is pretty accurate. Tag, one turn of silver twist, ditto of claret, and ditto of yellow floss ; tail, one topping, and a slip of wood-duck ; butt, black ostrich ; body, one half silver thread, and the other light blue floss ; silver twist ; hackle, light blue (only down to the silver), blue jay at the shoulder. So far the fly is a compromise between the two Doctors. The wing, however, is peculiar, having a greasy look from the two gold pheasant rump feathers in it. *Imprimis*, two tippet feathers, with a jungle cock on either side as long as the hook, over these again two gold pheasant rump feathers (same size as the tippet), one topping over all; blue macaw ribs and black head. It is a showy fly, but I would banish the rump feathers, and use doubled jungle cock instead. I think it would be quite as attractive, and would lose that greasy look, which I do not admire.

No. 4. This is also a capital fly on the Ness or anywhere else; it is a nice warm fly and a favourite of mine. Tag, gold tinsel and yellow floss; tail, one topping; body, orange-yellow, merging into distinct orange, and that again into a red-brown or burnt sienna at the shoulder, some of it to be picked out at the breast; grouse hackle only on shoulder; wing, sprigs of pintail, bustard, peacock, and tippet, one topping over.

No. 5. Tag, silver tinsel and blue floss; tail, one topping; butt, black ostrich; body, three turns of gold-coloured floss, the rest bright yellow pig's wool; silver tinsel; orange-yellow hackle over the wool only, with a light purple claret at shoulder; mixed wing of gold pheasant tail, pintail, gallina fibres, red, yellow and orange swan fibres, kingfisher cheeks, and blue macaw ribs.

No. 6. Tail, one topping; body half yellow and half lightish medium blue pig's wool; silver twist medium blue hackle (only over blue wool), grouse hackle on shoulder; wing, one tippet feather and strips of gold pheasant tail, bustard and pintail over it; a few sprigs of gold pheasant sword feather for ribs. This is also a capital general fly; the body is somewhat like one of the Conon bodies. The same fly, with pea-green pig's wool and hackle makes a good change.

No. 7. Tag, silver tinsel, and one turn of ruby floss; tail, one topping; body, orange merging to brown, and that into blue pig's wool, dressed roughish; hackle, darkish medium blue only at shoulder; silver tinsel; wing, a tippet feather, and slips of brown mallard and pintail over it, two short pea-green parrot feathers over the butts of these feathers; blue macaw ribs.

No. 8. Tag, silver tinsel and orange floss; butt, black ostrich; body, gold coloured floss three turns, black mohair; silver tinsel; black hackle, blue jay on shoulder; wing, slices of yellow and orange swan, brown and grey mallard and gold pheasant tail, a few sprigs of tippet, one topping over all; blue macaw ribs; kingfisher at either cheek. This is also a capital fly for the Shin.

The above patterns, with an exception or two, are from the selection of my worthy gossip Snowie, of Inverness.

No. 9. *The Highlander.*—I have included this fly in the list of Ness flies, though I think it is better for the Carron and some of the Rosshire rivers than the Ness. It is the best fly you can put on the Carron. Tag, silver twist and gold floss; tail, a topping; butt, black ostrich; body, gold-coloured floss, nearly half up the body for a small fly; if large, a few turns of silk and thin yellow pig's wool, above this dirty olive-green mohair; silver tinsel; pea-green hackle from tail to head, blue jay at shoulder; wings, sprigs of tippet gold pheasant tail and mallard, with pintail over, doubled jungle cock on either side, and over all a topping; black head. (Plate XVIII, Fig. 2.)

The two Doctors and the Popham are often used with advantage, and the Claret and the Highlander may be found useful at times.

The Ness flies are usually small, not larger than grilse flies, and even in heavy water a very moderate sized fly is sufficient. They run from 6 or 7 to 10 or 11.

THE CONON

The Conon is a large river which has some capital tributaries, the best of which, perhaps, is the Blackwater, which for its length is usually very well stocked with fish. The upper parts of the Conon are very pretty and tempting, containing fine streams and good pools, but the lower reaches are heavy and dull. The fish for the most part run through them without resting long, and while they do rest rise but indifferently.

Here are three flies for the Conon, all of which are first-rate general flies and will kill anywhere.

No. 1. Tag, two turns of silver tinsel; tail, one topping and some sprigs of tippet; body, one turn of bright orange-brown pig's wool, continued with yellow half-way up, and the remaining half with medium (inclining to light) blue, body, rough and well picked out; broadish silver tinsel; black hackle, pretty thick, but only laid on at the shoulder; wing, bright mottled peacock, with a shortish jungle cock on either side, rather better than half the length of the wing.

No. 2. Tag, tail, and body as before, merely changing black pig's wool for the blue. The hackle is the same, but is dressed over the whole of the black wool (or half the body); wing, one tippet, with bright peacock over it, short jungle cock on either side as before.

No. 3. Tag and tail as before. Body, olive-yellow changing

PLATE XVII.

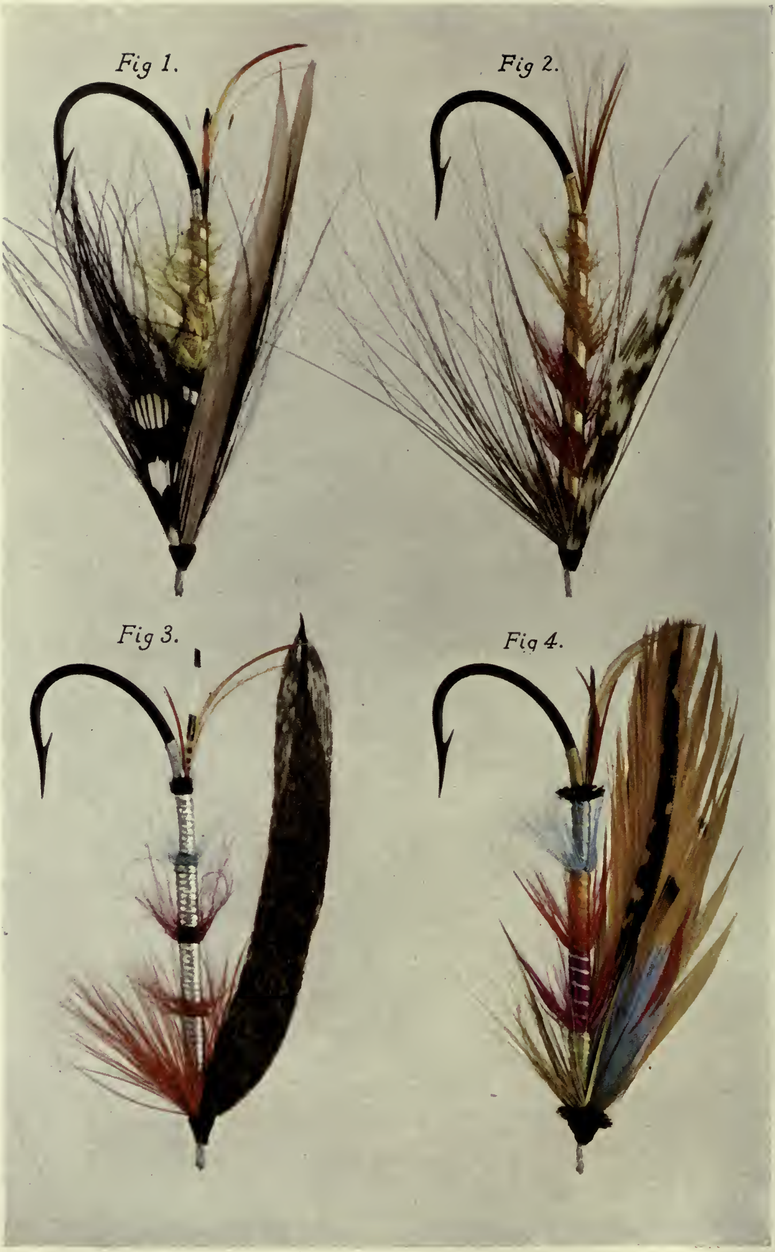
Fig 1.
Fig 2.
Fig 3.
Fig 4.

To face Page 269.

SALMON FLIES.

1. The Brown Ackroyd.
2. The Tartan.
3. The Snow Fly.
4. The Shannon.

into dirty orange, and that again into a purple claret at the shoulder; silver tinsel; black hackle from tail to head; peacock wing.

The size of these flies for the Conon will vary from medium salmon down to small grilse size, or from 5 to 8 or 9.

THE LOCHY

I give now four flies for the Lochy. The Lochy flies should be dressed smaller even than the Ness, not much above sea trout size. These patterns are from Mr. Farlow, of 191 Strand.

No. 1. Tag, silver twist; tail, a topping and three or four sprigs of red parrot; body, two turns of yellow, ditto of red, and the rest of black crewel; gold tinsel; a black hackle only at the shoulder, with a blue jay over it; under wing, tippet with slips of brown mallard over, mixed wood-duck and gallina outside of that; blue macaw ribs.

No. 2. Tag, silver twist and orange floss; tail, one topping, a few sprigs of tippet and wood-duck mixed; butt, peacock herl; body, pale blue silk; fine silver thread doubled; lightish red claret hackle from butt to head, two turns of blue jay on shoulder; wing, gold pheasant tail and tippet sprigs mixed lightish mallard and gallina over; black head.

No. 3. Tag, silver twist and ruby silk; tail, sprigs of tippet black partridge, or, failing in that, a bit of dark teal and gallina mixed; butt, black ostrich herl; body, two turns of blue, and two of ruby floss, the rest of a dirty orange, or olive-yellow floss; gold thread doubled; olive hackle (down to ruby floss), grouse hackle on shoulder; wing, a strip of dark, almost black turkey, with light tippet over that, sprigs of tippet, bustard, bright red and yellow gallina over that, and mallard above that; blue macaw ribs and black head.

No. 4. Tag, silver twist and orange floss; tail, a yellow toucan feather; body, dark mulberry floss; gold tinsel; brown claret hackle, grouse hackle on shoulder; wing, same as No. 3; head black.

THE THURSO

The Thurso is one of the best early spring rivers in Scotland, and seldom fails in yielding sport. It is not a large river, but is fed by several small lakes. It is extremely prolific, but rather a dull dead stream, is perfectly open, devoid of high banks, and easy to fish. For all these reasons it is a capital river to enter a green hand on, or for those who are not equal to much fatigue, or to whom wading is tabooed. The flies for it should be dressed on good-sized hooks; the middle sizes, not so large as Dee and Tay hooks, nor so small as Ness flies, being preferable. These patterns are also from Farlow's; the fish having undergone a complete change in their tastes since I was there; for when I was there they preferred a sober coloured fly, but of late years they prefer more showy ones.*

The Dhoon Fly.—This was originally a Mahseer fly used in the Himalayas. How it came to be adopted here I cannot say, but it kills on one or two other rivers, particularly in spring on the Welsh Wye, where it is called the Canary. Tag, gold tinsel and ruby floss; tail, a topping; butt, black ostrich herl; body, in four joints, of bright yellow floss; at every joint a large wad of bright yellow wool is tied in for a hackle, and left very long and bushy; in the two lower joints it is yellow wool, the upper two bright orange-yellow pig's wool, very long and bushy; gold twist; hackle at shoulder yellow, and over it an orange hackle; wings, two big strips of bright orange (dyed swan) feather, two good long kingfisher or chatterer feathers at the cheeks; head black.

The Duke of Sutherland.—Tag, silver twist and gold-coloured floss; tail, one topping, some tippet sprigs with green and red parrot; butt, black ostrich herl; body, burnt sienna floss and bright medium green † (two turns of each), the rest of pig's wool of the same colour; hackle, ditto, ditto, with orange-yellow hackle on the shoulder; gold twist and silver tinsel; under wing, two tippet feathers, upper wing, strips of bustard and gold pheasant tail, over them sprigs of yellow-green swan, one topping, with Himalayan pheasant back feather (that with the white spot on it) on either cheek; blue macaw ribs; and black head.

Sir Francis Sykes.—Tag, silver twist and blue floss; tail, one topping and sprigs of teal and blue macaw; body, dark cinnamon-brown; hackle of the same colour; silver twist doubled; wing, mixed of gold pheasant tail, bustard, tippet, wood-duck, blue, red, yellow, and green swan sprigs; red head.

The Priest.—This is a good general fly, killing well in many parts of Ireland. Tag, gold twist and dark blue floss; tail, a topping and pale red ibis or flamingo; butt, black ostrich;

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* At least the fishers do!—Ed.

† By medium I mean that it is neither a decidedly yellow nor a decidedly blue-green, but strictly medium.—F. F.

body, three turns of orange floss, the rest dirty olive-brown mohair; gold tinsel and silver twist; hackle, golden olive, medium blue at shoulders; wing, dark turkey, or cock pheasant tail, over that fibres of bustard, and bright bastard bustard, brown mallard and a plentiful admixture of green swan sprigs; head red.

Switching Sandy.—Tag, silver tinsel and light orange-red floss; tail, a topping and tippet sprigs; butt, black ostrich herl; body, three turns of dark blue floss, two of yellow-green floss, the rest of rather a blue-green wool; gold tinsel; light yellow-green hackle with a darker blue-green on shoulder; wing, gold pheasant tail, the same dyed pinkish, shreds of brown mallard, wood-duck and bastard bustard, blue and yellow green swan sprigs; black head. The body and hackle of this fly are so like the Highlander, that it will be found to kill on the Ness, the Carron, the Blackwater, the Garry, and many other Ross and Sutherlandshire rivers; on many of these rivers, greens are in favour; other very favourite flies for Thurso are, the Britannia, the Childers, the Namsen, the Butcher, and Major. Sizes from 4 to 9 or 10.

THE LAXFORD

Patterns also from Farlow's.

The Lascelles.—Tag, silver twist, and lemon-yellow floss; tail, a topping, teal and mauve macaw sprigs; butt, black ostrich herl; body, half lemon-yellow floss, and half pig's wool of the same colour; silver twist, with black silk beside it, as in the Colonel; hackle, brown claret (this is what I consider fiery brown, only, as I have said, I fear the fate of Martin Kelly, if I attempt to decide this awful shade of mystery), speckled gallina on shoulder; wing, a gold pheasant rump and a saddle feather, sprigs of gold pheasant tail, and bastard bustard, yellow and blue sprigs, with a few fibres of gold pheasant sword feather, over all a good slice of gallina; head black. Size 9 and 10.

The next fly has no name, and as that is a very inconvenient hiatus, particularly as it would be a capital general fly, I call it.

The Laxford.—Tag, gold twist; tail, one topping; body, gold-coloured floss silk; hackle, bright yellow; silver tinsel and gold twist; darkish blue hackle at shoulder; wing, a lump of peacock, over it sprigs of bustard and bastard bustard, topping over all, and blue macaw ribs; black head. Size 9 and 10.

THE AWE AND THE ORCHY

The same flies are used on both these rivers. I wrote and asked a friend to obtain patterns for me if possible, and he got them for me from Colonel Campbell, of Skipness, whose reputation as a sportsman is only second to his fame as an author; for few, if any, modern books of sporting adventures can compare in point of general interest and sportsmanlike handling with the *Old Forest Ranger* and *My Indian Journal*, both of which are the productions of Colonel Campbell's pen. He sends four flies.

No. 1 is almost identical with No. 1 in the Conon patterns; see page 268. It is a common favourite, and a regular trial horse in most of the Highland rivers. The only difference I can discern is, that the turn of orange-brown pig's wool, which commences the tail end of the fly, is transferred to the shoulder and the colours run yellow, blue, and orange. The jungle cock is also wanting, but these are matters of no moment. The Colonel says of this fly, this is "the old legitimate Orchy and Awe fly, and is considered a 'great medicine' by the natives, who ignore all others. It is a good fly, and is used of various sizes, according to the state of the water, the enclosed pattern being rather above the medium size (the enclosed pattern was what I should call a largish 8 hook); but I have found the three following more deadly":—

No. 2. *The Indian Crow*.—This fly is a slight variation of the Popham, the lower joint being orange-yellow, the next two light blue; the hackle light blue instead of jay; silver thread, the joints being separated by black ostrich instead of peacock herl. The Colonel says of this fly: "So-called from the feathers of the Indian crow in the body. I tried this fly for the first time about five years ago, and have killed with it and the Butcher, No. 3, more and larger fish than with any other—a deadly fly in any river on which I have tried it."

No. 3 is *the Butcher*; but no two tyers dress the Butcher alike, and in this one the claret is changed to bright red, the blue is medium, the claret hackle is a brown olive, with a turn of jay at the breast, and the wing is mixed of tippet and gold pheasant tail, a good deal of bustard, a little gallina, blue, red, and yellow swan, a topping over all, and a pair of short jungle cock feathers at sides. The Colonel says: "Good either on the Awe or the Orchy"; and he adds, "the water being very clear both in the Awe and Orchy, single gut must always be used."

No. 4. *The Canary.*—This fly is more often called the "Goldfinch," and I mention the fact, as another fly has already been saddled with the same appellation. I have given one Goldfinch dressing, but as there is some variety in this, I give the Colonel's as well.

Tag, gold tinsel and gold-coloured floss; tail, a topping, and short yellow toucan feather; butt, black ostrich; body, gold tinsel, in two joints, divided by two turns of black ostrich herl, with short yellow toucan feathers, tied in at the joints for hackles, as in the fashion of the Popham. Those at the breast increase a size larger of course; head, black ostrich; wings, five or six toppings, with blue macaw ribs. Of this, the Colonel says: "Good either for Awe or Orchy, particularly when the water is low"; and he concludes, "the above four flies are the only ones I ever use, and I find that I kill as many fish as my neighbours, sometimes more; when *they* fail to start a fish you may go home."

I have also half a dozen patterns of flies for the Awe from Malcolm Macnicol, of Dalmally, who is *the* tyer of flies for all that part of the country. Malcolm is a first-rate hand either with rod and gaff or dubbing and feather. They are all sober flies, in black and grey coats.

No. 1. Tag, silver thread, and one turn of orange floss; tail, a small topping; body, black mohair; black hackle; medium silver tinsel; wings, strips of silver-grey mottled turkey, or in default a bit of good bright peacock might do.

No. 2 is similar, save that at the tail end of the body there is one turn of light yellow mohair, and the wings are strips of bluish black from a heron's wing.

No. 3 consists of a Blue Doctor, with a good-sized Indian crow feather for tail; body and hackle darkish shade of blue, and a silver-grey mottled turkey or peacock wing.

No. 4 is very much of a Highlander body and hackle. The tag is silver thread and blue floss; tail, tippet and some fibres from a claret hackle; body, two turns of yellow pig's wool, the rest of darkish pea-green floss; hackle, lightish yellow-green; silver tinsel; wing, speckled brown turkey, grey towards the tips.

No. 5. Tag, silver thread; tail, a bit of orange mohair and teal; body, two turns of medium pea-green floss, and the rest of bright medium blue mohair, a few fibres of light claret mohair being thrown in at the shoulder ; silver tinsel ; hackle, light claret ; wings, slips of black heron.

No. 6. Tag, silver thread ; tail, a good-sized Indian crow feather ; body, two turns of yellow pig's wool, the rest darkish blue mohair, with a pinch of fiery red pig's wool thrown in at the shoulder ; silver tinsel ; black hackle ; wing, silver grey mottled turkey or peacock. Hooks, Nos. 7 and 8.

THE GARRY OF LOCH NESS

This is a spring river, and requires large flies—Nos. 3 and 4. These three flies are sent me by Mr. Snowie of Inverness, who is the best authority for flies upon the rivers in Inverness, Nairn, Elgin, Ross, Sutherland, and Caithness.

No. 1. Tag, silver tinsel and lemon floss ; tail, a topping and some black partridge ; butt, black ostrich herl ; body, orange floss, three or four turns, dark orange pig's wool (almost red) one-third, a lighter and browner orange for the rest of the body, dressed roughish, and picked out ; broad silver tinsel and gold twist ; hackle, bright orange, light blue on the shoulders, with gallina over it ; under wing, a tippet and strips of bustard, peacock and gold pheasant tail over it, a sword feather over that, and topping over all ; blue macaw ribs ; a jungle cock feather at either shoulder ; head, black. Dressed large on straight hook.

No. 2. Tag, gold tinsel and mulberry and gold-coloured floss ; tail, a topping, and some sprigs of tippet and wood-duck ; butt, black ostrich herl ; body, gold-coloured floss silk, three or four turns, and mixed medium green and yellow pig's wool, the green predominating ; broad silver tinsel and gold twist ; black hackle, gallina (pretty thick) on the shoulder ; under wing, a tippet feather and a sword feather, with strips of orange, yellow, and dark claret-red swan, strips of gold pheasant tail, brown mallard, bustard over it ; teal on either shoulder, topping over all ; blue macaw ribs ; black head.

No. 3. Tag, silver tinsel and gold-coloured floss ; tail, a topping ; butt, black ostrich ; body, one-third gold-coloured floss, the rest darkish pig's wool ; silver tinsel ; hackle, black, blue jay on shoulder ; wing, a slice or two of gold pheasant tippet, two or three slices orange swan, strips of grey mallard and gold pheasant tail, doubled jungle cock on either side ; blue macaw ribs ; black head. There is another capital fly for the Garry in early spring, called

PLATE XVIII.

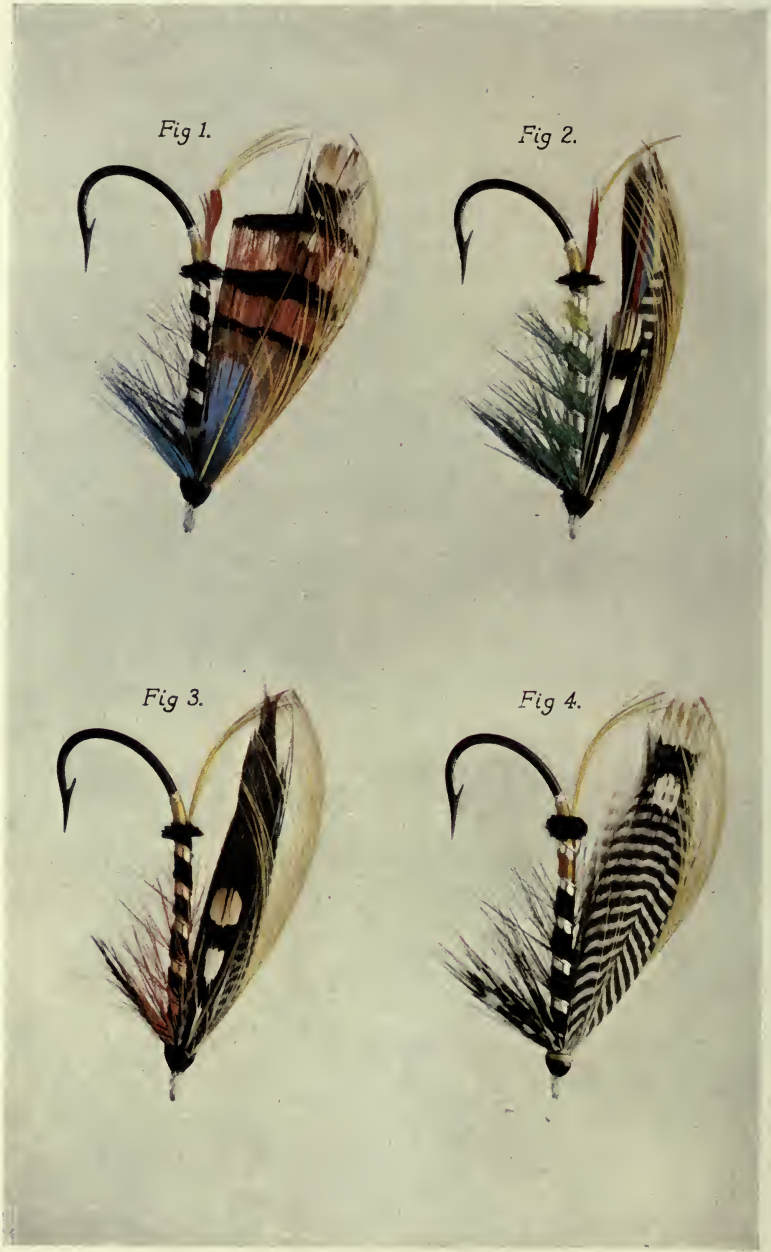
Fig 1.
Fig 2.
Fig 3.
Fig 4.

To face Page 275.

SALMON FLIES.

1. The Black Ranger.
2. The Highlander.
3. The Thunder and Lightning.
4. The Black and Teal.

The Snow Fly.—Tag, silver tinsel; tail, ibis, wood-duck, and small topping; butt, a turn or two of black wool; the body is in four joints, and is composed of stout silver twist, at every joint a wad of pig's wool is tied in and picked out; this at the first joint is light blue, at the second, medium claret, at the third, orange, and the head of the fourth on the shoulder is yellow, this is picked out to answer for a hackle: over this is a short orange hackle, the main fibre of which is well covered by the butt of the wing and the head, which latter is of blue wool; the wing is three or four good slices of dark, almost black turkey, with light (not quite white) tips, and one topping over all. It will be seen, if examined, that there is nothing in the composition of this fly which can be cut. The butt is of wool or crewel, as is also the head; the body is almost solid; the pig's wool at the joints may be chewed, but cannot be destroyed. The only hackle is at the shoulder, and that, as I have said, is well protected. The kelts may do their worst with it. It is almost, if not quite, impervious. It kills well also on the Helmsdale. I had the pattern of Farlow. As it is only for heavy spring waters it is dressed large. (Plate, XVII, Fig. 3.)

THE SHIN

Is a very fine river, often showing excellent sport. In the spring the salmon are seldom found above the falls, but as the summer gets on, the higher reaches become better stocked. This river was for many years in the hands of my poor old friend Andrew Young, whose name is so well known in the history of the salmon. Since his death it has been let out in rods.

Patterns from Snowie.

No. 1. Tag, gold tinsel and orange floss; tail, one topping; butt, black ostrich herl; body, two or three turns of gold-coloured floss, half yellow and half bright claret-red pig's wool; black hackle, light claret at shoulder; under wing, a tippet, strips of peacock, gold pheasant tail, mallard, peacock stained pale yellow over; blue macaw ribs; topping over all.

No. 2. Tag, silver tinsel and gold floss; tail, a topping; butt, black ostrich; body, one-third gold floss, the rest light olive-green mohair; silver tinsel; black hackle; blue jay on shoulder; under wing, two short gold pheasant saddle feathers, over this strips of gold pheasant and common hen pheasant tail, a good slice of bustard and pintail on either side, with a few fibres of tippet, kingfisher on either cheek, blue macaw ribs, and one topping over all; black head.

No. 3. Tag, silver tinsel and mulberry floss; tail, a topping and some wood-duck; butt, black ostrich; body, gold floss two turns, one-third yellow, the rest very dark olive pig's wool; hackle, black, blue jay on shoulder; under wing, a tippet feather, over it, gold pheasant tail, pintail, mallard, a gold pheasant rump feather, a topping over all, blue macaw ribs. Medium hooks in spring, smaller for summer, 6 and 7, 8, 9 and 10. See also No. 8 of the Ness flies; also the Highlander.

THE OYKEL

Patterns from Farlow.

No. 1. Tag, silver twist and pale yellow floss; tail, a topping and kingfisher; body, black floss, over this spirals of silver twist, bright red floss, and silver tinsel (the floss in the middle), all these together almost equal in breadth to the black floss. A whisp of red mohair at breast; over this a few strands of gallina and blue jay, about one turn of each, over all black heron's hackle, not too thick, but reaching to the bend; wing, gold pheasant tail and tippet fibres, over it some teal, bustard and gallina, yellow macaw ribs; orange-yellow crewel head.

No. 2. Tag, gold twist and orange-yellow floss; tail, a topping; body, copper-red floss; medium silver tinsel; hackle, medium olive, bustard hackle at shoulder; wing, florican and galling, with dirty red and yellow fibres, brown mallard over and a few gallina fibres over that, blue macaw ribs; black head.

No. 3. Tag, gold twist, burnt sienna floss; tail, tippet and gallina fibres, thin; butt, black ostrich; body, one quarter medium orange floss, three quarters black floss; silver tinsel and greenish olive hackle, one turn of yellowish olive at shoulder; wing, orange-yellow and dirty red fibres, with a few blue macaw, slips of bustard, a bit of silver mottled turkey or peacock in the middle, blue macaw ribs; black head; hooks from 6 to 8.

THE BRORA

The Brora is a river which has for many years remained in the same hands, and as little is known about it by the public, no doubt the renters have a pretty good thing, and are wise enough to keep the knowledge of their sport to themselves.

Patterns from Snowie.

No. 1. Tag, silver twist, and gold-coloured floss ; tail, one topping ; body, gold-coloured floss, two turns, medium brown mohair ; silver tinsel ; longish fibred black hackle (only on shoulder) ; wing, a strip of peacock stained yellow, gold pheasant tail, sprigs of tippet, strips of teal on either side, a topping over all.

No. 2. Tag, silver tinsel and orange floss ; tail, a topping ; butt, black ostrich ; body, half orange floss and half black mohair ; hackle, gallina only at shoulder ; under wing, a bit of tippet (longish), orange-yellow and claret strips of swan, gold pheasant tail, mallard, pintail, a topping over all, blue macaw ribs ; short jungle cock on either cheek ; black head.

No. 3. *John Scott.*—This is a very tasty-looking fly, being decorated with what is called in Ireland a mane, which is made by tying in on the back small locks of mohair of different colours ; tag, silver tinsel and gold-coloured floss ; tail, a topping ; butt, blue ostrich herl ; body, half gold-coloured floss and half medium blue. The mane is composed of locks of yellow-orange, purple claret and medium blue mohair ; silver tinsel ; hackle, medium blue, longish in the fibre, and only on shoulder ; wing, fibres of tippet, strips of black partridge and bustard on either side, a topping over all ; the mane very much supplies the wing ; kingfisher on either cheek ; black head.

The Butcher and Childers are also capital flies on the Brora, and the Popham is also said to kill well at times. Flies from 6 or 7 to 9 or 10.*

THE HELMSDALE

Is a small river, rather dependent on rain ;† and though it often yields good sport in the spring, it is often for some period too low for fishing as the summer comes on.

Patterns from Snowie.

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* My acquaintance with the Brora is limited to three consecutive days in March, 1909, when my gillie prescribed the Green Highlander (Plate XVIII, Fig. 2), as the only true medicine. Nor had I cause to complain, for I had thirteen fish in the three days.—Ed.

† The Helmsdale is considerably larger than the Brora. Since Francis's day its salmon angling has been developed in a degree without parallel in any other river except the Wye. Not only have all the river and sea nets been removed, but by raising the level of the lochs at the head of the river, a steady flow of water is secured throughout the summer months, and angling is carried on all the time.—Ed.

No. 1. Tag, silver twist and orange floss ; tail, one topping ; butt, black ostrich ; body, three turns of orange floss, the rest of medium brown pig's wool ; silver tinsel ; small black hackle, grouse hackle on shoulder ; wing, a slice of tippet, strips of bustard, pintail, gold pheasant tail, gallina, and yellow swan, a topping over all ; blue macaw ribs ; black head.

No. 2. Tag, silver twist ; tail, a topping ; butt, black ostrich herl ; body, gold-coloured floss one-third, the rest pea-green pig's wool (roughish and picked out) ; silver twist ; grouse hackle (thickish) on shoulder ; wing, a bit of tippet, strips of gold pheasant tail and teal, plenty of orange sprigs, a topping over all ; two short jungle cock at cheeks.

No. 3. Tag, silver tinsel and orange floss ; tail, a topping ; butt, blue ostrich herl ; body, ruby floss three turns, olive and then medium blue mohair in equal parts (roughish and picked out), silver twist ; grouse hackle at shoulder ; wing as before, with the addition of a slice of gallina (the round spotted) ; head, black.

Add to these the Butcher, Childers, and the Snow Fly, noted above. The Helmsdale is not a large river, and the flies are dressed on hooks from 7 to 10.*

THE BEAULY

Is a fine large river, and belongs chiefly to Lord Lovat. The weir is a hard one to get up, and in the weir pool great numbers of fish are often congregated. Here, two or three years since, the Master of Lovat had in three days perhaps the most extraordinary sport ever had in Great Britain.

Patterns from Snowie.

There is a singular fly used on the Beauly, which is *there* termed the *Snow Fly*, and as long as there is any snow water on the river that fly kills well ; far better indeed than any other. It is dressed on a big long-shanked round-head hook like the Tay flies.

Beauly Snow Fly (Plate, XV, Fig. 1).—It boasts neither tag nor tail ; the body is of lightish blue pig's wool, rather sparely dressed ; silver tinsel and gold twist ; black heron's hackle, as long in the fibre or longer than the hook ; wings, a large bunch of bronze-coloured peacock herl ; round the shoulder over this is tied hackle-wise a ruff of bright orange mohair, which gives a brilliant and unusual look to the fly.

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* Early in the season I have killed fish in Helmsdale on a 3½ in. fly.—Ed.

PLATE XIX.

Fig 1.

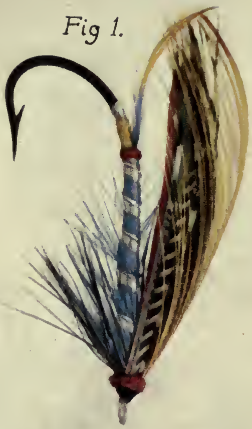


Fig 2.

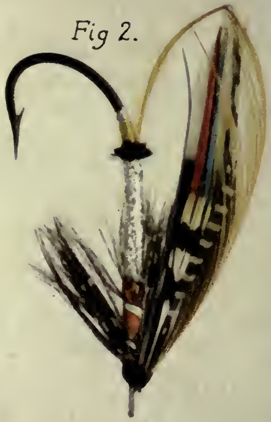


Fig 3.

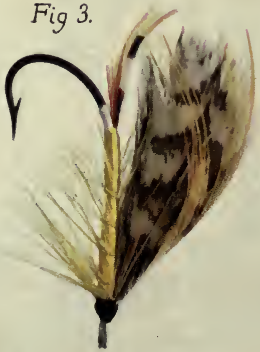
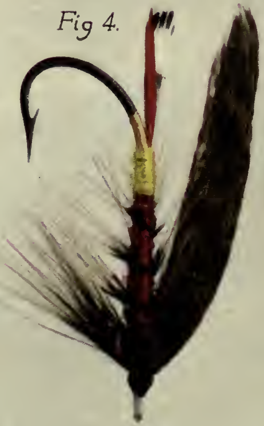


Fig 4.



To face Page 279.

SALMON FLIES.

1. The Blue Doctor.
2. The Dusty Miller.
3. The Bittern.
4. Francis' Favourite.

No. 2. Tag, silver twist and gold coloured floss; tail, a topping, ; butt, black ostrich herl; body, two turns of gold-coloured floss, half yellow and half black mohair; hackle, black (over the black mohair only), at the shoulder darkish blue (sparely) with blue jay over it; wing, a couple of strips of tippet, gold pheasant tail, brown mallard, gallina, yellow, red, and orange sprigs, a topping over all, and blue macaw ribs; black head.

No. 3. Tail, a topping and mallard; body, medium blue; ditto., hackle; gold tinsel; gallina hackle at shoulder, blue jay over it; wings, strips of bustard, dark and light turkey, and some peacock herls, and a topping over all. Flies, 5 and 6 for spring, 7 and 8 for summer.

THE FINDHORN

The Findhorn is a very fine and lovely river, and the pools and streams perfection. At one time there was no river in Scotland that gave such sport to the rod, but nets near the mouth, and incessant netting of the lower pools thin the fish, and injure the sport greatly.

It can be fished from the shore, but some of the casts require deepish wading. It is a long river, with mountainous sources, and heavy rains may be going on back in the mountains, which the angler has no idea of, and the river will come down sometimes suddenly with a bore or a wave six feet high. The banks are high and rocky, and often inaccessible, and woe be to the angler if he is caught between them. The late Sir A. P. Gordon Cumming showed me one spot where he had had a very narrow escape. He had walked across a part of the river bed over which a little stream ran not higher than his ankles, to a cast about one hundred yards up the river. He was fishing the cast, when suddenly he fancied the water was thickening in colour. It was a brilliant day, without a sign of rain. He looked over his shoulder up the river, and about one hundred and fifty or two hundred yards off he saw a big red wave, about five or six feet high, coming down like a race horse: not a moment was to be lost, and he bolted for the landing-place as hard as his legs would carry him, and he only just reached it, for the little stream, which was not over his ankles five minutes before, was up to his waist before he got out of it, and in another half-minute an elephant would have been carried away in it. I was nearly caught once in the same way on the upper part of the Coquet. I mention these facts, that anglers may be aware of them when they are fishing Highland rivers.

The accompanying patterns I obtained from Sir A. P. Gordon Cumming,* one of the best amateur tyers in the North. They are all old well-used favourites, and are the result of twenty years' experience. The Findhorn spring flies are rather large and showy—not so large as the Dee flies, perhaps, but full large, some of the flies (the largest) being dressed on the ordinary Limerick hook, from No. 2 to No. 5. In low bright water they may be used smaller than this.

No. 1. Tag, gold thread and puce floss; tail, a good sized topping, some tippet, and a kingfisher feather; butt, black ostrich; body, lightish claret floss; silver tinsel and gold twist (not together, but equidistant); hackle, light claret, blue jay at shoulder; wing, two large tippet feathers, almost the full length of the wing, over it sprigs of gold pheasant tail, a good many sprigs of both red and blue macaw, slips of brown gled and dark bustard; on either shoulder, nearly half the length of the wing, the tips of two blue macaw feathers; the head is composed of orange mohair, set on like a hackle, and forming a ruff. Most of the Findhorn flies are mounted in this way, and it makes them very conspicuous. In some Sir Alexander used the soft silky *Pinna marina*, and it has a very striking effect. The hook of this fly is a No. 2 or 3. The size sent is between the two.

No. 2. Tag, silver thread and yellow floss; tail, a good-sized topping; some tippet, and gallina, butt, black ostrich; body, copper-coloured floss; broad silver tinsel and narrow gold ditto side by side; hackle, medium claret, blue jay at shoulder; wing, as before, the tippets not quite so long, a little English bustard, brown mallard, and brown speckled turkey instead of gled, and bright bustard, red macaw and pale green swan sprigs, no blue macaw at all; hook, a size smaller than the last.

No. 3. Tag, silver thread and ruby floss; tail, a good-sized topping and tippet ; butt, black ostrich ; body orange-yellow floss ; broad gold tinsel ; rather light blue hackle, blue jay at shoulder ; wing, one medium-sized tippet, two good slices of brown speckled turkey, sprigs of gold pheasant tail, a few of red and blue macaw ; bright red mohair head and collar ; blue macaw horns tied in above this ; hook, same as last.

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* Since the above was printed I have had the news of poor Sir Alexander's death. But a short year since I enjoyed the pleasure of his hospitality in his beautiful residence on the banks of the lovely Findhorn; we fished, tied flies, and held sweet converse upon matters piscatorial, day by day, and I have seldom enjoyed a week more thoroughly than that I spent at Altyre; he was then apparently in the pride of his strength and the prime of manhood. How beautifully he tied the salmon fly, blending its colours into one harmonious combination, and with what a workmanlike and skilful hand he hurled it across the waters; but alas and in truth it will be long ere I shall "look upon his like again!"—F. F.

No. 4. Tag, silver tinsel ; tail, one good topping ; body, three turns of ruby floss, the rest of light apple-green floss ; silver and gold tinsel, equidistant ; hackle, bright medium green, inclining to a blue-green, black heron hackle on shoulder, the fibre reaching the barb of the hook ; wing, a bunch of emerald-green peacock herl (taken from the scimitar-shaped feather), slices of brown speckled turkey, bright peacock, a little bustard, red and blue macaw and green swan ; collar, blue mohair ; hook, a size smaller than the last.

No. 5. Tag, silver thread and a small bunch of red mohair ; tail, topping and tippet, sprigs of gold pheasant sword feather, blue macaw and pale yellow-green parrot ; butt, black ostrich ; body, same as before, only a shade or so lighter ; gold and silver tinsel side by side ; hackle, coch y bondu, stained brown, black heron on shoulder, reaching to point of hook ; wing, strips of bustard and bright peacock, sprigs of blue and red macaw and yellow-green swan ; collar, bright orange mohair ; hook, same as last.

No. 6. Tag, silver thread and yellow floss ; tail, a longish topping tippet, and a red toucan feather ; butt, black ostrich ; body, black floss ; broad silver tinsel and gold thread side by side ; hackle, the dark chocolate brown cock's feather used in the Spey flies, black heron at shoulder, and gallina over it ; wing, two tippet feathers (two-thirds the length of wing), mixed peacock and gold pheasant tail, with fibres of red and blue macaw ; olive-yellow mohair collar ; hook, No. 4.

No. 7. Tag, gold thread ; tail, a topping, and some gallina ; body, one turn of orange-yellow pig's wool, then two light clarety red, two of medium blue, three of clarety red, and the same of orange-yellow ; broadish gold tinsel ; dark purple hackle, black hackle at shoulder, blue jay over it ; wing, one tippet (half the length of wing), mixed gold pheasant tail, mallard, a little gallina, a little bright bustard, a few sprigs of long tippet, and of yellow and claret swan, and several blue macaw sprigs ; black head, no collar ; hook, No. 5.

No. 8. Tag, silver thread and darkish blue floss ; tail, a good topping ; but, black ostrich ; body, one-third orange-yellow floss, the rest dark chocolate floss; hackle, a brown claret, black heron on shoulder (shortish); wing, a tippet (long), the tip of a black partridge feather, a bit of dark brown mallard, and the tip of a green parrot feather, over this sprigs of brown turkey, gold pheasant tail, two or three copper-coloured peacock herls, red and blue macaw, kingfisher on either cheek; mohair collar not too heavy, the colour of which is not orange nor pink, but a sort of madder. Hook, a trifle shorter than the last.

Sir Alexander gave some directions for varying the flies, and I cannot do better than append his letter.

"Altyre, Forres, N.B., July 30, 1865.

"My dear Sir,—I have selected eight of the flies which I have found most killing on the Findhorn, during twenty years' work. These may be successfully varied by changing the colour of the bodies and heads; red for orange, black for yellow heads, and bodies made black for claret or green, and *vice versâ*. These eight patterns I generally adhere to throughout the year, by dressing them one, two, and three sizes smaller. Blue bodies may be substituted in the case of the black and two clarets, with advantage to the angler and detriment to the fish. The wings of two are far too long, but this you need not mind. *All* should have one or two toppings (shortish) for tails, and if the wing is *dressed thinner* it is an *immense* improvement, where economy is no object, to put two long toppings on the wing.

"Yours truly,
"A. P. GORDON CUMMING."

THE TAY

The Tay is a splendid river. The water is heavy, but some of the pools and streams are magnificent. The fishing on the lower part of the river is mostly from a boat, and the style is called "harling." Three rods are used, and the boat is rowed to and fro over the casts. Two of the rods usually have a couple of flies on each, and the third a phantom minnow, and it is not an uncommon thing for two of the rods to have a fish on at the same moment, and I have even heard an instance or two of all three of them being at work simultaneously. A few of the casts, however, can be fished from the shore, and where this is the case, the sport is of a very superior kind; for, owing to the size of the

PLATE XX.

To face Page 283.

Alderon Stream, River Tay.

river and weight of the stream, Tay fish nearly always show great sport. The Tay has been rendered famous by poor Leech, as it was on one of the best known parts of the river that the immortal Briggs killed the great salmon. A magnificent piece of water it is, and is known by the euphonious title of Hell Hole. The system of letting fishing on the Tay is a capital one, as it provides fishing for a large number of persons at a moderate outlay, while the total of rents is considerable. It is customary to take a certain water for one special day per week throughout the season, five other persons taking the other disposable five days, each lessee fishing it in turn. It is best in summer and autumn ; gives a few fish in the spring, but the best sport is in the autumn.

The spring flies for the Tay are of the largest size. Like those of the Dee they are tied upon very long shanked hooks, but the round bend is perferred to the Limerick.

The Black Dog.—Tail, a tuft of olive-yellow pig's wool ; body, black mohair ; gold and silver tinsel with orange silk between ; two or three black hackles ; gallina at shoulder ; wing, grey speckled turkey, two long slips. The hook is 3½ ins. long and ⅞ of an inch wide, and the succeeding flies run down to 2 ins. or even smaller. (Plate XV, Fig. 2.)

The Tartan (Tay).—Tag, silver twist ; tail, a slice of tippet and orange-yellow pig's wool ; butt, peacock herl ; body, pig's wool as follows, orange, yellow, bright pea-green, red, and blue grey, dressed rough and picked out ; broad silver tinsel gallina at shoulder ; wing, slips of grey and light-brown turkey, sprigs of yellow, red, and lavender swan with a bunch of peacock herl over all ; peacock head.

The Nicholson.—This is a very gay affair. Tag, silver twist ; tail, a topping, a bit of red parrot, and a wisp of red mohair ; over this, as a butt, is wound on a blue jay hackle, and over that black ostrich herl. The fly is then separated by hackles into three divisions, and each of these divisions is in two joints of different coloured floss. The lower joint is scarlet and black, above this is another jay hackle and black herl. The second joint is lemon and scarlet, and above this is a scarlet hackle and black herl. The third joint is orange and medium blue floss, over this medium blue hackle, and above that a darkish orange coch y bondu hackle. Wing, large cock of the rock or two orange hackles, strips of bustard, argus, lightish turkey, lavender, yellow, and red swan, one topping over all, jungle cock at cheeks ; peacock herl head.

The Murray.—Tag, silver twist; tail, yellow pig's wool; butt, black ostrich; body, darkish red claret; hackle the same; silver tinsel; gallina at shoulder; speckled dun turkey wings two strips (that with the light edge to the extreme tip of the feather being preferred).

The patterns of the above four flies were furnished to me by Mr. Paton of Perth, the great obeah-man of angling mysteries in that district, and a first-rate artificer of all sporting requisites. Any angler going to the Tay will scarcely fail to look in on him for a chat and advice.

The Wasp (Blue).—Tag, silver twist; tail, tippet and red mohair; butt, black ostrich; body, about two-fifths yellow pig's wool and three-fifths darkish blue pig's wool; silver tinsel; medium blue hackle (only over blue wool), black hackle at shoulder; peacock head; wing, two strips of dun (speckled) turkey. It is sometimes the fashion, when the fibres cannot be obtained long enough for the required wing, to tie double wings of shortish fibre, that is, there is the usual pair at the shoulder and another pair tied on half-way down the back, as previously noted by Mr. Maxwell. They have also another dodge on the Tay to make a long-fibred wing. They take a strand of gut of the required length, strip the fibres off feathers, and lap them neatly along on the gut so that the gut shall form a sort of artificial quill. Gallina looks very well so, and answers for the small silver-grey mottled turkey, which is scarce.

The Wasp (Claret).—Tag, silver twist; tail, gallina and mallard; butt, black ostrich; body, olive-yellow pig's wool one-third, two turns of medium claret ditto, and the rest of medium blue ditto; silver tinsel; hackle, medium red claret; gallina at shoulder; silver grey speckled turkey wing; peacock head. There is another pattern of wasp with black upper half to the body, mixed wing, and peacock's breast feather for shoulder hackle.

I have here given half a dozen of the best known Tay flies, but the variety is endless, almost any arrangement of wool, hackle, and tinsel doing for the bodies at times, in which blue, claret, and yellow are the principal admixtures. The wings are of various shades of turkey for the most part, the lightly speckled reddish brown, with the faint white tip, as I have said, being the favourite.

I add a few patterns sent me by my friend Mr. William James Davidson of Glasgow, many years a frequenter of the

Tay. The first fly has no name; and as most of the flies on the Tay have a name, I give it the very suitable one of

The Policeman, blue being his prevailing tinge, and taking of prisoners his occupation. Tag, silver tinsel and red-orange floss; tail, light brown speckled turkey and yellow swan; body, rough darkish medium blue pig's wool; hackle one shade darker, dark reddish brown hackle at shoulder; broad silver tinsel; a few sprigs of medium claret and orange pig's wool thrown in just under the shoulder hackle; wing, light brown speckled turkey, with a bunch of bronze peacock's herl over it. Hooks 3½ ins. to 2 ins. This fly, made of the largest Tay size, does well for high spring water. Mr. Davidson has a high opinion of it, and he has reason to have, as he says, "I have found this fly the best on the Tay until the second week in May; with the identical specimen I enclose, I killed in a few hours on the Stobhall water four clean run fish in the beginning of May."

The Waterwitch.—There are two specimens of this fly, one with a rough pig's wool body, and this is the larger fly, and one of floss, but the colours are similar. Tag, silver tinsel and golden floss; tail, a topping; butt, black ostrich; body, one-third yellow, two-thirds lightish blue; hackle, jay (only over the blue); wing, a (round spot) gallina feather, over this mixed wing, gold pheasant tail, brown and grey turkey, fibres of tippet and sword feathers, and blue macaw ribs. Of these Mr. Davidson adds: "They are my favourites, and I will back them against any others for the Tay, the Tummel, the Garry, and the Orchy, from the month of May to the close of the season." Barring the gallina feather in the wing, the pattern is a wonderfully general favourite throughout Scotland. Hooks from 2½ ins. to 1¾ in.

The Lion.—Tag, embossed silver tinsel and ruby floss; tail, a topping; butt, black ostrich; body, embossed silver tinsel, showing a few thin rings of pale green floss between; hackle (at shoulder) longish black heron; wing, fibres of peacock, brown mallard, pinkish stained grey mallard, tippet, and gallina, two toppings set on apart like wings, with blue macaw ribs.

Mr. Davidson thus concludes: "The blue body and peacock's wing (Policeman) for spring; the Waterwitch for summer and autumn, and the Lion at the close of the season, are what I chiefly depend on; and, armed with a proper assortment of these, the angler requires no other lure."

THE TUMMEL, GARRY, ISLA

and all the other tributaries of the Tay, are fished with flies of precisely the same pattern as those used for the Tay, regard being had to the size of the water, and the fly being suitably reduced thereto.

THE SPEY

The Spey is another magnificent river, which often gives grand sport; and as the river is large and the angling is mostly from the bank,* and the banks are frequently high, while the stream is not only heavy but often tremendously rapid and rough as is the bottom, an indifferent fisherman cannot expect much sport on the Spey. It is a very long river, having many mountainous tributaries, and thus it often keeps up and out of condition for fishing for a much longer time than is agreeable to the angler. This is frequently the case in spring, when the snows on the mountains are melting, and when sport to any extent cannot well be relied on. After the great bulk of the snow is gone, in the early summer, when the river is settling steadily down and the grilse are beginning to come up, is perhaps the best time for the Spey.

The Spey flies are very curious productions to look at, it being customary to dress them the reverse way of the hackle, and to send the twist or tinsel the opposite way to the hackle.

The Spey Dog.—This is usually dressed large for the spring, the long shanked Dee hooks being preferred. Body, black pig's wool; up this is then wound some broad silver tinsel in widish rings; over the tinsel is laid on a large black feather (it can hardly be called hackle) with a lightish dun tip, taken from the side of a Scotch cock's tail. The feather is dressed the wrong way, so that the hackle stands out abruptly, and it is carried round the opposite way to the tinsel, as some of the tinsel crosses it; over this hackle is wound some gold tinsel, not side by side with the silver, but quite independent of it. This aids the glitter of the fly, and strengthens and keeps the hackle secure. At the shoulder a teal hackle; wing, a good wad of gold pheasant tail, with two long strips of grey mallard with brownish points over it. The fly can be varied by using a brown hackle and turkey instead of gold pheasant tail, add also orange silk between the tinsels.

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* True, if "bank fishing" be held to include deep and difficult wading in this swift river.—Ed.

The hook used in these flies is 3 ins. long in the shank, and the bend is that given as No. 3 in the scale, but which is barely 2¼ ins. long in the shank.

The Purple King.—Body, a light purple mohair; hackle, brownish black with light blue dun tip; tinsel, gold and silver and silver twist over hackle as before; teal shoulder, and two strips of grey mallard wing with brown tips. (Plate XV, Fig. 3.)

The Green King.—Body, orange and olive-yellow mixed mohair; hackle, brown with grey tips; the rest of the fly as before.

For these last two patterns I am indebted to my friend Mr. C. Grant of Aberlour. Mr. Grant very kindly furnished me with minute particulars as to the dressing, dyeing, etc., and I cannot put his directions in a better form than he has put them himself, and therefore I append his letter. In it he describes two other flies I had not the patterns of, viz. "the Green Dog" and "Purpy." They are well-known standard flies on the Spey, and may be dressed down to the smallest size for midsummer; the "Black and teal" already described will be found very hard to beat on the Spey.

"DEAR SIR,

Agreeably to my promise, I now send you the pattern Spey flies, viz. two Purple Kings and one Green King, which you will easily distinguish. The hackles are got from the common *Scotch cock*, and lie on each side of the tail, at the tip of the wings. The cock is rarely to be met with except with Spey fishers, who breed them for the sake of their feathers. The dubbing or "grounds" of the Purple King are composed of purple (Berlin wool), stone red, dyed from the moss on stones, and scarlet wool. The dubbing of Green King is composed of green Berlin wool, stone red, yellow, a little orange, and scarlet.

In spring the Purple King is of a less red colour than one used at present. The Green King at that period is more *green*, but, as the season advances, more red is used in both, and redder feathers. I enclose some dubbing of each to fit the present season.

Without having any prejudice against *gaudy flies*, I would prefer Purple and Green Kings with their *numerous offspring*, provided I could get proper hackles to tie them, to any flies that can be used on the Spey. The flies which I have sent you will be in size next month (July), and I have no doubt but that they will *kill* upon any river in Scotland.

The dubbing of Green Dog is the same as Green King, feather a little lighter, with gold-colour spate and pea-green thread at equal distances on the body of the hook or fly. The Purple, or ' Purpy,' a thirty-second cousin of the Purple King, has a hackle somewhat redder than that of his progenitor; dubbing, dark blue and stone red, with gold spate and purple thread on body of fly at equal distances."

CHAPTER XI

SALMON FLIES—*continued*

List of Flies for Irish Rivers

THE ERNE, BALLYSHANNON

THESE patterns were poor Pat McKay's, than whom no better artificer ever turned fly out of hand.

No. 1. *The Parson* has been already described amongst the general flies; but, since I described it, I have received some patterns with a letter of explanation from my friend Dr. Sheil, the courteous and liberal proprietor of the Erne, to whom I owe many kindnesses and some good fishing on one of the finest rivers it has ever been my lot to cast a fly. For the Erne is the beau-ideal of a salmon river, containing every kind of water that is found in salmon rivers, and all in perfection. Here we have falls, rapids, broken pools, rocky torrents, and swift glassy currents, and even heavy reaches for boat fishing. The fish run large and nearly always show the finest sport. The sport is best in the months of May and July, if the river is low enough, for it is much more apt to be too high than too low, running as it does from such a very large lake as Lough Erne, which, indeed, is rather two large lakes than one. The river is very rarely too low for sport, and even in the hottest and brightest weather sport is possible. As Dr. Sheil's letter gives the history of the Parson, I trust he will excuse me for making the information upon such an interesting point public.

My dear Sir,

I send four Parsons I have borrowed from Mr. Hobson, and I will send you a couple made with summer duck in the wing. The first " Parson," and called from him, was used by the Rev. Arthur Meyrick, of Romsbury; it was two large toppings, a yellow body, yellow hackle, very thin twist run close together up the body—I mean half as close as in any of those flies I send. He said he got it from Lord Bolingbroke at Christchurch. He changed the body to orange; both were silk bodies.

The late Mr. William Larket, of Derby, put cock of the rock in the wing. I think I put the first fur body to the fly—it was orange pig's wool. Mr. Larket and then Mr. Hobson altered the fur to a mixture of red and yellow. Mr. Hobson added to this the purple and fiery brown under the wing, which Pat McKay borrowed and adopted, and nothing has beaten this pattern.

Yours,

S. Sheil.

The flies sent are all very similar to the patterns already described, save that some of them have in the wing strips of summer or wood duck, as it is more commonly termed, instead of pintail. Some have merely the toppings and two cock of the rock feathers in the wing. Most of them have longish kingfisher feathers at the cheek. Some have and some have not the bit of tippet for an under wing. Some, instead of jay, have a medium blue hackle at shoulder, and some a claret hackle. In these latter cases, the hackle is dressed outside or over the wing, the ribs put on over that; these are macaw where the blue feather changes to red at the points. The tags vary a little, some being puce, some orange, and some yellow silk. The bodies vary slightly from yellow pig to yellow with little or more orange. One of them has a brown body, but I do not much like it. The hackles run from golden to golden-olive and orange. It will thus be seen that a Parson may be as varied as his creeds are: he may be a gorgeous Russo-Greek ritualist or a plain parson Adams.

No. 2. Tag, silver twist and medium blue floss; tail, a topping, and some tippet; butt, black ostrich; body, medium claret floss, three turns, the rest medium orange floss; silver tinsel; orange hackle, blue jay (sparish) at shoulder; wing, mixed gold pheasant tail, gallina, and tippet, one topping, red macaw-ribs; black head.

No. 3. Tag, silver twist, medium blue floss; tail, a topping; butt, black ostrich; body, three turns of light orange floss, the rest of light purple (lake*); silver twist; hackle, same colour as body, blue jay at shoulder ; wing, as in No. 2, the gold pheasant tail perhaps predominating more and with blue ribs.

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* This is a difficult colour to describe, as it is neither claret, nor red, nor purple, nor puce, nor mulberry, nor mauve: it is more the old-fashioned colour called "lake."—F. F.

No. 4. Tag, silver twist and puce floss ; tail, a topping and some tippet ; butt, black ostrich ; body, two-thirds light orange floss, one-third dark fiery orange-red floss ; silver tinsel ; medium claret hackle, grouse hackle at shoulder ; wing, the same as in No. 3, with a slight increase of gallina ; head, black.

No. 5. Tag, silver twist and puce floss ; tail, a topping and some tippet ; butt, black ostrich ; body, gold-coloured floss, three turns, the rest of dark orange pig's wool, silver twist ; light red claret hackle, grouse ditto at shoulder ; wing, three toppings, two strips of bright well-marked bittern wing, and some tippet sprigs, a couple of good long kingfisher, one on either shoulder, and blue macaw ribs ; a very pretty, taking-looking fly.

No. 6. Tag, silver tinsel and mulberry floss ; tail, a topping, and tippet sprigs ; butt, black ostrich ; body, two-thirds a greenish-yellow mohair, and one-third dirty olive mohair ; broad gold tinsel ; hackle, brown when held down, but golden-olive when held up to the light, with grouse on shoulder ; under wing some tippet and tail sprigs with gallina, and a brown mallard wing over, kingfisher on shoulder, and blue macaw ribs.

No. 7. *The H.I.S.*—This fly will be found noticed in the letter of a friend under "Owenmore and Ballycroy." Tag, silver tinsel ; tail, a topping, and some tippet ; body, orange-yellow floss, gold tinsel ; coch y bondu hackle ; a few turns of longish black heron at the shoulder give it a spider-like look ; wing, brown mallard, two or three fibres of blue macaw, blue jay hackled over the wing. A capital killer.

The size of the hooks for the above flies is from 5 to 8.

LOUGH MELVIN

On this fine lough, which is some seven miles in length, and contains salmon, grilse, charr, lake, gillaroo, and other trout in abundance, and is not far from the Erne, the flies used are as sober as those of the Erne are often gaudy.

No. 1. *The O'Donoghue.*—This is a prime favourite. Tag, gold tinsel and orange floss ; tail, a topping ; butt, black ostrich ; body, olive-yellow pig's wool, merging into bright fiery claret, and that again into black, gold twist ; body, roughish ; dark claret hackle, with blue jay on shoulder ; wing, a tippet feather, with brown mallard wing over, and blue macaw ribs ; black head.

No. 2. Tag, silver twist and pale blue floss ; tail, a topping ; body, half orange pig's wool and half black, silver twist ; black hackle (over black wool only) ; blue jay on shoulder ; wing (mixed) gold pheasant tail and tippet, bittern wing, mallard and gallina, yellow, green, and claret sprigs, kingfisher on shoulder ; blue macaw ribs ; black head.

No. 3. Tag, silver twist and orange floss ; tail, a topping ; body, mulberry pig's wool ; hackle the same, with blue jay at shoulder ; silver twist ; wing, a tippet feather with mallard wing over ; blue macaw ribs.

No. 4. The same as the last, save that the body and hackle are of a lightish olive.

I obtained the above from the fishermen at Lough Melvin, when fishing it some years since. Hooks from 7 to 10.

LOUGH GILL

Another large lough near Sligo. There is a very favourite fly used there which sometimes kills on Lough Melvin ; it is called the Lough Gill fly. Tag, silver twist and orange floss ; tail, a topping, and some mallard ; body, black mohair, with a broad ring in the centre of dark dirty red, a few fibres of the same warped into the breast as a hackle ; blue jay hackle on shoulder ; wing, a tippet feather and brown mallard wing ; hook No. 9.

THE MOY

The Moy is a large and rather open river, resembling, above the weirs, some of the streamy upper reaches of the Thames, where rush-beds abound ; it flows from Lough Conn, a very large lough. Much of the fishing, particularly below the weir, up to which the tide flows, is carried on from boats or cots. The opening of the weir has much improved the fishing in the upper portions, and has undoubtedly tended to bring larger fish into the river than were formerly found in it. It is a capital river for young hands to commence on, as the work is easy, and the numbers of fish keep the attention fixed on the sport.

No. 1. Tag, silver tinsel ; tail, a topping ; butt purple, herl ; body, three turns of orange floss, the rest of darkish blue floss, silver tinsel and twist ; dark blue hackle ; tippet tied on as a hackle at shoulder; wing, five or six toppings; blue macaw ribs; black head. This is of course a high water fly; hook No. 9.

No. 2. *The Thunder and Lightning.*—Tag, gold tinsel; tail, a topping; butt, black ostrich; body, three turns of lightish orange floss, the rest of black floss; gold tinsel; light orange hackle, with a little jay at shoulder; wing, dark brown mallard, one topping over it; blue macaw ribs; dark purple head; hooks from 7 to 10. (Plate XVIII, Fig. 3.)

No. 3. *The Orange and Grouse.*—Tag, silver tinsel; tail, a topping and kingfisher feather; butt, black ostrich; body, three turns of lake floss, and the rest of light orange floss; silver tinsel; hackle, longish grouse, trimmed on the breast, not on the back, three or four toppings over it for wing; blue jay (sparely) at shoulder; blue macaw ribs; and black head. The grouse fibres help the wing. This and the last are good general flies, and most of the Moy flies are more or less generally useful patterns; hooks 10 to 12.

No. 4. Tag, silver tinsel; tail, a topping; body, two turns of buff floss, the rest of lake floss; silver tinsel; medium orange hackle, blue jay at shoulder; wing, a tippet and two thin cock or rock feathers, fine strips of black partridge and gold pheasant tail, a topping, and blue macaw ribs; purple head ; hooks 8 to 10.

No. 5. Tag, gold tinsel; tail, a topping; butt, black ostrich; body, two turns of buff floss, the rest of copper-coloured floss; gold tinsel; gallina hackle, trimmed on the breast, not on back; blue jay at shoulder (moderate); wing, two or three thin cock of rock and reddish toucan feathers, sprigs of tippet and gold pheasant tail, and brown mallard, one topping, and blue macaw ribs; purple head; hooks 9 and 10.

No. 6. Tag, gold tinsel; tail, a topping, and kingfisher feather; butt, black ostrich; body, three turns of orange floss, the rest of black ditto, or of black horsehair, which gives a brighter and more durable body; gold tinsel; gallina hackle, trimmed on breast, not on back; wing, brown mallard one topping, and blue macaw ribs; black head; hooks 7 to 11.

The above are all patterns I obtained from Pat Hearns, of Ballina, some years since: they are standards. For so large a river the Moy flies are small. The fish are mostly grilse, and only grilse flies, and those, at times, of small size, are needed. In the spring, when larger fish are now taken, they may be used two or three sizes larger. Writing to Hearns lately for patterns, he sent me all the old patterns above, and with this addition; it is a beautiful fly to the eye, so I give it.

No. 7. Tag, gold tinsel; tail, two toppings; butt, white ostrich; body, three turns of orange floss, the rest of violet floss; gold tinsel; dark purple hackle (rather of a lavender tint when held up to the light), some tippet tied as a hackle at the shoulders, blue jay over; wing, six or seven toppings, with a blue chatterer on *en croupe;* blue macaw ribs; black head; hooks 7 and 8.

LOUGH CONN

Patterns also from Hearns. The Erris flies are curious specimens of art, and by no means easy to tie. They are mostly jointed flies, many of them having also manes from the back of each joint, and some with a turn or two of hackle, also at the joint.

No. 1. Tag, gold thread; tail, a topping; butt, black ostrich, five joints, four of them being composed of black floss, each divided by three turns of gold thread, the top or shoulder joint being of yellow floss; at the third joint from the tail three turns of an olive hackle are laid on; from each joint springs a mane or tuft of mohair; the lowest one is dirty red, the next light claret, the next dirty red again, the next darkish purple-claret, and the top one just under the wing orange; the hackle at the shoulder is a dark red stained brown, with blue jay over it; the wing, mallard and gold pheasant tail, blue macaw ribs, kingfisher at cheeks; black head.

No. 2. Tag, silver tinsel; tail, a topping and a small jungle cock; butt, black ostrich; body, five joints, yellow and black floss alternately, divided by silver thread, and above this one turn of a red hackle, stained light olive; manes of mohair, from the back of each joint, the first darkish claret, second dark red, third darker claret, fourth darker red, fifth a mixture of yellow, brown and red; just under, as a support to each mane, is tied in a feather from the breast of the Indian crow, increasing in length (as do the manes) as they progress up towards the wing; hackle, on shoulder, olive; red rump feather of gold pheasant, tied in on the shoulder as a hackle, over that again a turn or two of blue jay; wing, tippet fibres gold pheasant tail, and brown mallard, one topping, and blue macaw ribs; black head.

No. 3. This is No. 6 of the Moy flies.

These flies do equally well for the Owenmore and Ballycroy. Hooks from 5 to 9.

THE OWENMORE AND BALLYCROY RIVERS

Patterns from Hearns. These two rivers run very near to each other. The Ballycroy is the river described by Maxwell in his *Wild Sports of the West.*

No. 1. Tag, silver tinsel; tail, a small topping, a slip of black partridge, a kingfisher, and an Indian crow breast feather; butt, black ostrich; body, three turns of orange floss, the rest of black floss, silver tinsel; hackle, gallina stained yellow, clipped at breast, not on the back, tippet feather tied on as hackle at breast, blue jay over; wing, a red hackle and a yellow hackle, a red rump feather of gold pheasant, sprigs of tippet, slips of gold pheasant tail and peacock, a large blue chatterer feather over all *en croupe* or on the back, Indian crow at the cheeks, blue macaw ribs; black head. This fly can be varied by using lake floss instead of black.

No. 2. Tag, silver twist; tail, a topping; butt, one turn of orange floss; body, black floss in five joints, at each joint two turns of fine silver thread, then from the back comes the mane, and then for the two middle joints, side by side with the silver thread, is taken a turn of orange floss, so that the termination of the three lowest joints is one turn of orange floss; the two lowest manes are a dirty clarety red, the next two are a mixture of yellow, olive, and light claret; the hackle is at the shoulder only, and is brown olive, and over it a little blue jay; the wing, a slip of tippet, over it slips of mallard and of peacock, blue macaw ribs, and black head.

No. 3 is *The Claret*, already described at page 253, as to the body and hackle, save that there is no orange floss at the lower end; substitute a little blue jay at shoulder for black hackle, and make the wings of fine dark mallard, with blue ribs, and you have a fly that will kill not only in Erris, but all over Ireland. Hooks from 6 to 10, and in low summer water sea-trout size.

There are a great variety of these jointed bodies used in Erris; some have blue and yellow, or blue, yellow, and black joints alternately, with black or coloured herls or hackles at each joint. They are considered indispensable enchantments by those who admire them, and as they are a peculiar class of fly, I have gone into them, though my own faith is by no means implicit. My friend, Mr. S., and his cousin rented the Ballycroy river for some years, and I wrote to him to ask for a cast from his experience, as, although I fished the Owenmore several times, I only fished the Ballycroy once. Herewith I give his letter to me, from which it will be seen that he has no faith whatever in the jointed and maned flies which are supposed to emanate from and flourish particularly in Erris :—

" Dear F.—The flies on the Owenmore and Owenduff rivers some years ago were always what is called ' jointed,' and were made in two ways ; the first had the joints made of hackles of divers colours, tied as in the pattern I send you, but of course on a smaller hook. The enclosed is a specimen from the Dee, in Aberdeenshire, to which river it was transported by Mr. Gordon, from Ballycroy, and has since been naturalised.* The other jointed fly is made thus : topping for tail, then three different colours of floss silk for body, with three rings of twist at the end of each, and standing out from these joints three long tags of different coloured mohair, ordinary mixed wing, and hackle at shoulder. It is a very difficult fly to tie, and not worth a rush when tied, except that in its *dry* state it looks very pretty, when in the water, on the contrary, it all bags together, and I never did much good with it. The fly, on the contrary, with the plain turkey wing was an invention of our own, and killed 48 salmon and 137 white trout in one week, on the Owenduff. The fly with the mallard wing and fiery body also kills right well on both rivers, and so do the Ballina flies, more especially one of Pat Hearns', called the Thunder and Lightning. An equally great pet is the enclosed, with the frayed gut. He is confoundedly ugly, sir, having been composed by your humble servant ; but treat him with respect, for this very year that identical specimen has slain six *Salmo salar* in the river Erne that thou knowest of. I enclose four or five more of what MacGowan calls Ballycroy flies, but they are awful impostors (on second thought I don't, for they are no use at all). The fish, in fact, like plain, sober mallard and turkey, and furnace hackles, with either orange or brown bodies, and a jay about the shoulders.

H. I. S."

Mr. S. enclosed me several patterns, some with orange and green joints, others of all the colours in the rainbow, and with manes of all sorts of colours. I will not fatigue the reader and burden my fly list with their description, but will merely describe the plain flies referred to in the above letter.

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* I never could understand how the Nicholson, which was a regular Erris notion, got on to the Tay, but the course of its introduction becomes pretty clear from the above. The fly referred to strongly resembles the Nicholson.
F. F.

No. 4. This is the fly that killed the 48 salmon and 137 white trout in a week. N.B. The white trout at Ballycroy run up to six or seven pounds weight, and average from two to three pounds. Tag, gold thread; tail, a slip of mottled brown turkey, and tuft of orange mohair; butt, black ostrich; body, half orange mohair (inclining to darkish) and half black mohair; black hackle (over brown mohair only), gold thread over the orange, and gold tinsel over the black part of body; wing, rich brown mottled turkey; black head.

No. 5. Tag, silver thread and orange floss; tail, a topping; body, two-fifths dark dirty orange-yellow pig's wool, three-fifths darkish claret, broadish gold tinsel; medium claret hackle at shoulder; blue jay over brown mallard wing, and black head, hooks 9 and 10.

The fly which is lauded for the Erne will be found under that river as the H. I. S.

GALWAY AND CONNEMARA

(Costello, Ballynahinch, and Co.)—These patterns are sent me by Nicholson, of Galway, who ties for the district. Two or three of them are old acquaintances renewed.

The Costello I do not know from experience, but the Ballynahinch rivers and lakes I have fished. The river is short and not very large, but what there is of it, above the weir, is pretty. The lakes for scenery are lovely, and the sport at times is good, more particularly with white trout, and a good take of salmon may be got at times, wind, weather, and water permitting.

No. 1. Tag, gold tinsel and orange floss; tail, a topping; body, a regular Lee body of silver-grey fur, with cuckoo dun hackle to match; silver twist; blue jay on shoulder; wing, a long tippet (nearly full length of wing), some peacock, also a few sprigs of *green* peacock herl, red, blue, and yellow macaw sprigs—the red most plentiful; black head.

No. 2. Tag, gold tinsel and orange floss; tail, gallina; body, two-thirds medium blue floss, the upper third medium orange; silver tinsel; hackle, a bright brown-olive, blue jay on shoulder wing, gold pheasant tail, cock pheasant ditto, peacock, and gallina, blue macaw ribs; black head.

No. 3. Tag, gold tinsel; tail, a topping; butt, black ostrich; body, three-fifths medium orange floss, the upper two-fifths darkish blue floss; gold tinsel; darkish claret hackle; wing a largish tippet feather, brown speckled turkey, gold pheasant tail, blue, green, and yellow swan, and blue macaw ribs ; black head.

No. 4. This is a weird-looking fly ; the contrast between the dark blue body and light yellow hackle is so strong. Tag, gold tinsel and light orange floss ; tail, a topping ; body, dark blue floss ; silver tinsel ; hackle, light yellow, blue jay on shoulder ; wing, brown mallard (streaked), gold pheasant tail, and some sword feather ; blue macaw ribs.

No. 5. Tag, gold twist and yellow floss ; tail, teal, mallard, green parrot and flamingo ; but, black ostrich ; body, two-thirds ruby floss and one-third medium blue ; hackle, darkish blue, flamingo feather as hackle at shoulder, clipped at breast ; wing, a rump feather of gold pheasant, light yellow-green parrot, a little pintail and brown mallard over all ; blue macaw ribs, black head. Vary this fly with a black hackle and all ruby body, no blue.

No. 6. Tag, silver thread and light blue floss ; tail, a topping ; butt, black ostrich ; body, light orange floss ; silver thread ; black hackle, blue jay on shoulder ; wing, mottled argus, sprigs of tippet, green parrot, and gold pheasant tail, well mixed ; black head.

These flies vary pretty much in the order in which they are described, from 7 to 11.

THE INCHIQUIN FLY

This is a fly used, as its name implies, chiefly on the Inchiquin lake ; but it is a standard pattern throughout the West of Ireland. Tail, brown mallard, and some purple fibres from the peacock's breast ; body, fiery red pig's wool (like to the dark red hair or whiskers of a thorough bog-trotter), gold thread ; a red hackle at shoulder ; brown mallard wing, well backed with strands from the peacock's breast. Both body and hackle may be made darker at pleasure. Hooks 10 to 11.

THE LENNAN AND LOCH FERN IN DONEGAL

The Lennan is a dull river, and with the exception of close to the weir, is not of much use for salmon-fishing ; but Loch Fern, from which it runs, gives fair sport at times. Loch Fern is not a large lake, and is weedy and shallow ; it is hardly worth going to, unless the angler chances to be going to or from Gweedore, *via* Rathmelton.

The Inchiquin fly does there, and it will do better if, instead of mallard and peacock breast wing, plain brown turkey, or gold pheasant tail are used. The body and hackle can also be varied by being made more or less sandy. Pig's wool, from the natural white to the above red, hackles of lighter or darker red to match, and wings of brown turkey or gold pheasant tail, are the correct thing. The flies should be rough and well picked out. Hooks 8 to 10.

THE SHANNON

The Shannon is a very large and heavy river. The water in places is very rapid, broken, and dangerous to the angler's hopes, as it often occurs that the place where a fish is hooked is so infested with hidden and awkward rocks that the angler is obliged to hold on and not give a yard of line if he can avoid it. The water at Castle Connell has long been celebrated as a first-class sporting water, and here the salmon-fisher frequently has magnificent sport. At Killaloe the water is more open and easy. Lough Derg, an expansion of the Shannon, gives splendid large trout-fishing, and when the fish are in the humour, great numbers are taken with the cross line. As on the Moy, much of the fishing is done from cots.

The large heavy water Shannon flies are very showy affairs. Here is one dressed for me by poor Blacker, years ago. It is quite a work of art.

No. 1. *The Shannon* (Plate XVII, Fig. 4).—Tag, gold tinsel and lemon-yellow floss; tail, two toppings, scarlet ibis and blue macaw; butt, black ostrich; body, of floss silk, in joints of various colour, pale blue, orange, puce, and pea-green, every joint being mounted by a turn of ostrich herl of the same colour as the joint and over this a hackle of the same tint; at the shoulder one or two gold pheasant rump feathers are used as hackles; gold thread warped on each joint separately; wing, two bright yellow macaw feathers, with black streak down the centre, a strip of dark-specked argus on either side, and sprigs of tippet ditto, two or three slips of ibis at shoulder, and over them, on either cheek, a small feather of purple lory, two or three large toppings over all; blue macaw ribs, and black head; hook No. 2. I do not think the jointed body by any means necessary, nor is it used generally on the Shannon. The wing given is, I know, pretty much used, when the feathers can be obtained, but the yellow macaw feathers of the right size are not easy to obtain, and make the fly expensive to dress. Probably an orange body would answer all requisites, as orange is in favour on the Shannon.

The next three flies are dressed by Stephen Ellis, of Killaloe, one of the best practitioners on the Shannon in that part, and they are considered the best patterns which can be put on the river.

No. 2. Tag, silver tinsel and orange floss; tail, one large topping; body, darkish blue floss, silver tinsel; blue jay hackle half-way down the body; wing, a deep red-orange feather (cock of the rock might do) about the length of the hook, on either side of this two shorter orange-yellow macaw feathers, and a smallish tippet outside of them, over these an orange hackle, and over this four or five large toppings, over these some gold pheasant tail and gallina sprigs (loose), blue macaw ribs; medium orange ruff of mohair; hook No. 4.

No. 3. Tag, silver tinsel and medium green floss; tail two orange-yellow toucan feathers (short); body, brightish orange floss, silver tinsel; brown olive hackle, a turn or two of blue jay at shoulder; wing, a short cock of the rock, and two short orange-yellow macaw or toucan feathers, these not quite so long as the hook, over them mixed sprigs of gallina stained yellow, blue, and red macaw; head black; hook No. 9.

No. 4 is a fly with a similar body, tinsel, and hackle, with a couple of small yellow toucan feathers for tail, and a wing of mixed yellow stained mallard, tippet, gallina, and red and lavender macaw; black head; hook No. 10.

These two flies are rather grilse flies; but a size or two larger, they do equally well for salmon. The list is rather a short one, but Mr. Hurley, of Killaloe, who forwards me the patterns, says that—

"They answer for all the stations where fish are killed in any quantity, say Limerick, Castle Connel, and Killaloe. The large fly is only adapted for heavy water, in the very commencement of the season, and up to May 1. The medium size orange body is in use from that date until June 1, according to the height of the water; the small blue body then comes in for both peal and salmon until the close time."

I also wrote to Mr. Brady, the inspector of fisheries for Ireland, to ask him for some Shannon patterns, and he sent me several, as the handiwork of Captain C. Dunne, a first-rate angler, and, if I may judge of his productions, a first-rate fly tyer also. The flies he sends are capital general flies, and would kill anywhere.

No. 1. Tag, silver twist and light orange floss; tail, sprigs of green, bue, yellow, and red; body, ruby floss, silver twist; hackle, medium claret, jay at shoulder; wing, mixed fibres, red, green, and blue, and gallina, with a small bunch of tippet in the middle, two slices of brown mallard over, red macaw ribs, black head.

No. 2. Tag, silver twist and ruby floss; tail, red, yellow, and green, and tippet sprigs; body, orange-yellow floss; tinsel, hackles, wing and head as before.

No. 3 is *The Claret*, with the addition of a few dark blue fibres thrown in amongst the claret body, which has a very pretty effect, and a jay hackle at shoulder, instead of black. The wing, too, is dressed very much as in the last two flies.

No. 4 is *A Claret*, without the blue fibres, and with ruby floss instead of orange, at the tail end of the body; jay at the shoulder; and wing, as in the last, with the addition of two or three fibres of green peacock herl.

No. 5. Tag, silver twist and ruby floss; tail, one topping; body, black floss; hackle, medium claret, jay at shoulder, silver twist; wing, as above, with a little more blue in it. Reduced in size, this is a capital Connemara white trout fly.

No. 6. Tag, as in the last; tail, mixed fibres as above; body, greenish olive-yellow floss, silver thread; hackle, brown olive, jay at shoulder; wing, as in No. 1; black head, as have all these flies. Hooks 7, 8, and 9.

KILLARNEY AND THE FLESK

The far-famed lakes of Killarney often hold a good many salmon, but the nets and cross lines make single-rod fishing rather a precarious sport. The Flesk, which runs into the head of the lakes, is a pretty little river, but wants water to show any sport. A day or two's rain, however, brings it down, when the fish move up out of the lakes, and a brace or two may then be taken if the opportunity is seized, but it runs down almost as quickly as it rises. The Killarney lakes give very early fish.

No. 1. Tag, silver tinsel; tail, tippet and a kingfisher feather; butt, black ostrich; body, darkish medium blue floss; hackle, blue jay all the way up, orange at shoulder; wing, brown turkey, blue macaw ribs.

No. 2. Tag, silver twist; tail, a topping and bit of mallard and kingfisher feather; butt, red wool; body, darkish medium blue floss; hackle, blue jay all the way up, orange at shoulder; wing, brown turkey, blue macaw ribs.

No. 3. Tag, ruby silk; tail, mallard and tippet; butt, black ostrich; body, pale olive-green floss, gold tinsel; hackle, medium blue, brown-olive at shoulder; wing, mixed brown turkey, argus, and gold pheasant tail; head, blue ostrich.

No. 4. Tag, gold tinsel and lemon-yellow wool; tail, fibres of mallard, gallina, a topping and kingfisher feather; body, copper-coloured mohair; hackle, medium blue; wing, brown turkey and gold pheasant mixed, with fibres of blue macaw; black head. The bodies are sparely dressed. Hooks Nos. 6, 7, and 8.

THE LAUNE

The salmon enter Killarney through the Laune, in the upper part of which good sport is often had. The Laune is a fine wide river, rather heavy down towards Killorglin, but streamy and likely in the upper reaches. The fish do not rest long in it in the early part of the season, when they make at once for the lakes. Later on, however, good sport may be got in it.

No. 1. Tag, orange floss; tail, tippet sprigs; butt, black ostrich; body, half bright medium green, and half light orange floss, gold tinsel (narrow); medium blue hackle; brown hackle (not too long in fibre) at shoulder; wing, brown turkey, with a few fibres of tippet and blue macaw thrown in.

No. 2. This fly resembles the last, save that the body is in four joints: ruby, red, and orange alternately. The main hackle is blue jay, and there is a topping on the tail.

No. 3. Tag, silver tinsel; tail, tippet sprigs and kingfisher feather; butt, black ostrich; body, medium orange floss, gold tinsel (narrow): hackle, grouse, clipped *all round;* light orange hackle at shoulder (short); wing, a tippet feather, gold pheasant tail *au naturel*, and a small portion stained claret; head, black.

All the Laune bodies must be dressed as spare as possible, the hackles are short in fibre, and of the same size as in the Killarney and Flesk flies; and a peculiarity of the fishermen in this part of the world is, that they use a hook some two sizes larger in the bend than would commonly be used for the same fly, breaking off a piece of the shank of the hook to get the fly to the right size.

The flies for Killarney, the Flesk, and Laune, were tied for me by the fishermen there, when I was fishing in that quarter some years ago.

THE LEE, CORK

The Lee is in parts rather a quiet placid river; in many places, however, it breaks out into fine bold pools and streams, which form the very beau-ideal of the angler. It is not a very early river, though occasionally giving a spring fish or two to the persevering angler; but it gives capital sport later on. In parts it is a good deal cross lined.

No. 1. *The Yellow Anthony.*—Tag, silver twist; tail, a topping; butt, a scrap of yellow mohair; body, bluish silver-grey wool or fur; fine silver twist; silver grey dun hackle; dirty yellow hackle on shoulder; wing, a bit of peacock with mallard over it, blue macaw ribs; black head.

No. 2. *The Orange Anthony.*—Tag and tail as before; butt, a scrap of orange mohair; body, three turns of darkish blue mohair; the rest bluish silver-grey as before, a darkish blue hackle over the blue part, and silver-grey cuckoo dun over the grey part; medium orange hackle on shoulder; wing, as before with kingfisher on either cheek.

No. 3 is similar to No. 2, save that for orange butt and hackle, medium claret is to be substituted, and a few tippet sprigs let into the wing and no kingfisher.

No. 4 is similar to No. 1, save that it has blue jay hackle for yellow, some tippet sprigs in the wing, and kingfisher at the cheeks.

No. 5. Tag, silver twist; tail, a topping; butt, claret mohair; body, two-thirds bluish silver-grey fur, cuckoo dun hackle over it to match, clipped, the rest of body darkish blue mohair with medium blue hackle over; silver twist; brown claret hackle at shoulder; wing, strips of gold pheasant tail, brown mallard and peacock, a few tippet and black partridge fibres, blue macaw ribs, kingfisher at cheeks; black head.

No. 6. Tag, gold twist; tail, a topping; body, dark brown claret pig's wool; gold twist; hackle very dark blue, blue jay at shoulder; wing, a few fibres of tippet and bastard bustard with dark brown mallard wing over; blue macaw ribs, largish kingfisher at cheeks; black head.

Blacker used to dress some of these flies in distinct joints, with a short hackle at either joint, as in his "spirit flies" as he called them, but this does not make any addition to their attractiveness, and it certainly is no slight addition in the trouble of trying. The above are patterns I bought of Hackett, of Cork, when fishing the rivers in that neighbourhood some years since. Hooks from 5 or 6 to 9.

THE BLACKWATER (MALLOW)

Nos. 1, 2, and 3 of the Lee flies one size smaller will do for the Blackwater. The Blue Doctor, dressed with medium floss body, blue jay hackle and an orange-yellow hackle at shoulder, with a sober wing of tippet and green parrot sprigs and brown mallard over, and black head, does well. The Orange and Grouse (see Moy flies) with a sober tail and wing of gold pheasant tail, brown mallard, green and red parrot sprigs, and minus the puce floss, with a blue jay hackle at shoulder, is also a favourite.

The following three flies I got with others lately from Haynes, of Patrick Street, Cork. His flies are beautifully tied, and show all the marks of a first-rate artist.

No. 1. Tag, silver tinsel and orange floss; tail, black partridge, tippet and mallard sprigs; butt, black ostrich; body grey fur (same colour as in the Lee flies) for one-third of the body, the remaining two-thirds of medium yellowish-green mohair; hackles to match, silver-grey cuckoo dun (clipped) over the grey, and green of the same shade over the green, orange hackle at shoulder; narrow gold tinsel; wing slips from the streaked feather of the gold pheasant's tail, brown mallard over, sprigs of red and green parrot; blue macaw ribs; black head.

No. 2. Tag, gold tinsel; tail, a topping, and some tippet; butt, black ostrich; body, darkish blue, claret and grey fur, with blue claret and grey hackles to match, the lower (or blue one) clipped, yellow hackle at shoulder, with a turn or so of black hackle over it; wing, sprigs of bustard, brown turkey, tippet, green parrot, and brown mallard over; black head.

No. 3. Tag, silver, tinsel and orange floss; tail, sprigs of tippet; mallard, green mohair, and gallina stained pale blue; body, apple-green floss, fine gold twist, blue jay hackle all up, orange hackle on shoulder; wing, gold pheasant tail (streaked), bustard, green parrot, mallard over; black head.

The orange and grouse and apple-green may be dressed smaller for summer wear.

THE CARAGH AND LOUGH CURRANE (WATERVILLE)

The upper part of the Caragh is rather dull and heavy. The lower part, however, improves and gives some good pools and streams. It yields some sport, but would give very fine sport if the fish had but fair play; but what with the weir, the nets, and the crosslines, they are woefully harried. Lough Currane is a fine sheet of water. The river, however, is short; it yields very fine white trout and a salmon or two on any tolerable day.

The same flies kill both on Lough Currane and the Caragh, and they are for the most part of much the same character as those for the Lee and Blackwater, greys, blues, and clarets running more or less through them.

No. 1 is like No. 1 in the Lee flies, save that it has a medium blue instead of a yellow hackle at the shoulder, and tippet instead of peacock in the wing. It is dressed of large sea trout size for summer or Nos. 10 or 11.

No. 2 resembles No. 3 in the Lee flies, save that the grey and claret are reversed in position, and the hackle at the shoulder is medium blue. Hook No. 7.

No. 3. Tag, gold tinsel and orange floss; tail, one topping; body and hackles, dark blue and dark claret (half and half); gallina stained pale blue hackled on the shoulder; fine gold twist; wing (streaked), gold pheasant tail, some tippet, brown mallard over, kingfisher at cheek; black head; hook 7 or 8.

No. 4. Tag, silver tinsel and orange floss; tail, tippet and mallard; body, dark blue mohair; silver twist; hackle, very dark blue, blue jay on shoulder; wing, tippet, peacock, red parrot, and mallard over; black head; hook 10 or 11.

No. 5. Tag, silver tinsel and orange floss; tail, brown mallard and tippet; body, dirty dark brown-olive; hackle the same, light orange hackle on shoulder; fine gold twist; wing, tippet, bastard bustard, and brown mallard over, blue macaw ribs; black head; hook 10 or 11.

No. 6. Tag, silver tinsel and orange floss; tail, tippet, a topping, green parrot and mallard; body, dirty olive-yellow pig's wool; gold twist; hackle, medium blue, light orange on shoulder; wing, tippet, gold pheasant tail, green parrot and brown mallard over; hook 8 and 9. Years ago, I had this pattern of Blacker, when starting up to Thurso, and I never could make out what part of the country it hailed from, for I never could kill with it though much liking the look of the fly, and often trying it. Mr. Haynes has solved the mystery for me. Finding the root of a fly is more interesting to me than finding Greek roots used to be.

All the above patterns are from Haynes, as are those for the Kerry Blackwater which follow.

THE KERRY BLACKWATER

The same character of flies prevails here.

No. 1 is like the Lee No. 1, without the yellow hackle at the shoulder, and with a little claret mohair as a tag to counterpoise, and a strip of red parrot in the wing.

No. 2 is an Orange Anthony (Lee No. 2) without the kingfisher.

No. 3 is No. 2 in the Cork Blackwater. The colours running blue, grey in the middle, and claret, with a yellow hackle on the shoulder, and blue jay over it; wing, tippet, hen pheasant, red and green parrot, and brown mallard over.

No. 4 is a dark Blue Doctor for the lower two-thirds of its body, the upper third being an orange floss; blue jay hackle, and orange at shoulder; wing, tippet and mallard; blue macaw ribs, and black head.

No. 5 is a plain Yellow Anthony, with a bit of apple-green floss in the tag.

No. 6. Silver tinsel tag; tail, mallard, tippet, and lavender macaw; butt, black ostrich; body, medium orange floss, fine gold thread; greenish-olive hackle, blue jay on shoulder; wing, peacock, red parrot, yellow swan, and brown mallard over; blue macaw ribs; black head. These flies vary from 7 or 8 to 10 or 11.

THE SUIR

To obtain patterns of the Suir and Nore, I wrote to Mr. Brady, and he most kindly forwarded me the following patterns, with a note from a resident on the river, Mr. Staples, an extract from which note I append.

"I have not fished either Nore or Suir for two years. There has not been a fish up the Nore past Kilkenny this year, after all our trouble and expense, owing to the perfect system of poaching established on that unfortunate river; I have, therefore, only a few old patterns to send you. The two flies marked, '*My own pattern* best kind,' I found to beat every other fly on the Suir, tied to suit the water, large or small, and with the silk body either blue, with blue hackle, or yellow or dark orange over dark purple or dark mauve-coloured silk ; in this manner it can be varied to suit any taste ; you must use *argus pheasant* hackle round the shoulders. Both these flies are tied by myself, and have killed many fish.

" The little grey fly is also famous to the Suir, and the other flies I have found very good on the Nore."

No. 1. Tag, silver tinsel and orange-yellow floss ; tail, sprigs of bastard bustard and ibis ; butt, black ostrich ; body, red plum-coloured floss ; silver twist ; light orange hackle, argus pheasant hackle at shoulder ; wing, a good bunch of *green* peacock herl, with strips of brown turkey with dun points mixed, one topping over all ; black head ; hook No. 5.

No. 2 has a similar body and hackles ; a topping for tail, and lemon tag ; a small tippet feather for under wing, a *little* green peacock, some brown mallard, and a strand or two of gallina and grey mallard, stained yellow, with blue macaw ribs. See, for the varying of these two flies, Mr. Staples' letter. Hook No. 10.

No. 3. The grey fly referred to is not much bigger than a trout fly ; tag, silver tinsel ; tail, a topping ; butt, black ostrich ; body, a turn of orange floss, and the rest silver-grey fur ; very pale yellow hackle at shoulder only ; wing, a few sprigs of small tippet, brown mallard over it, and yellow gallina over that (wing rather thin) ; black head. The size of the flies must be varied to suit the water.

Subsequently I received other flies through Mr. Brady, for the early spring fishing ; I select two. In spring, the bodies are tied roughly of pig's wool ; silk bodies come in later, and comprise either orange, yellow, or green, with a red hackle.

No. 4. Tag, gold tinsel, and bright yellow pig's wool ; tail, a strand or two of bustard, gold pheasant tail, red parrot and mallard; body, medium blue pig's wool (dressed large and rough) ; silver tinsel ; blue jay hackle at shoulder ; wing, peacock herl (the blue eye of the feather forming the butt end of the wing) ; head, rough, and of yellow pig's wool.

No. 5. Tag, silver tinsel, and black pig's wool ; tail, green peacock herl, some tippet and blue macaw ; body, one-third dirty brown red, better than another third of dirty olive-yellow pig's wool, the rest black ; gold tinsel ; wing, peacock herl, with the eye at the butt as before; head, rough, of red pig's wool. Hooks respectively 3 and 4.

THE NORE

The patterns for the Nore are also from Mr. Staples.

No. 1. Tag, silver tinsel and olive-yellow pig's wool; tail, bustard, red parrot, and a topping; body, very dark purple-blue pig's wool (rather rough); blue jay hackle at shoulder, moderate, and not too much of it; silver tinsel; wing, a bunch of green peacock herl, with brown mallard over, interspersed with a little grey mallard, stained light yellow or buff, and one topping; head, olive-yellow pig's wool.

No. 2. Tag, gold tinsel, and medium blue pig's wool; tail, blue macaw; body, olive-yellow pig's wool, rough, and picked out at the breast; hackle, a golden olive (or rather orange) with a vivid black centre, at the shoulder; gold tinsel; wing, a bunch of copper-coloured peacock herl, and a good slip or two of blue macaw over it. This is a striking-looking fly, owing to the hackle chiefly.

No. 3. Tag, gold tinsel and lightish blue pig's wool; tail, Indian jay, and fibres of a buff hackle; body, dark red (tending to claret) pig's wool, rough and picked out; gold tinsel; lightish blue hackle at shoulder; wing, as in the last fly, with a slip of red parrot or macaw added.

No. 4 is a small Galway pattern; tag, gold twist and orange floss; tail, a topping; body, lake floss; hackle, gallina trimmed on the breast; fine silver tinsel; a turn or two of blue jay on shoulder; wing, mixed gold pheasant tail, gallina, tippet, bustard, mallard, green sprigs; blue macaw ribs, and a short kingfisher feather; black head. The flies run from No. 7 to 12.

The Nore is more of a summer river than the Suir, and the above pattern will kill well late in the season.

THE BUSH

Is a smallish and not very interesting river, being dull and heavy, and wanting in that briskness of stream and broken water which the experienced salmon-fisher loves to see; but like many other rivers of the same nature, it often holds a large quantity of fish, and in suitable weather gives good takes to the rod.*

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* It is a very early river, good sport being sometimes had in February; whereas in the Bann, a river six times the size of the Bush, flowing into the sea only six miles to the west of that little river, no salmon run until near midsummer.—Ed.

The following four flies were also made for me, through the agency of my friend Mr. Brady, by Wm. Doherty and Son, fly tyers, of Bushmills, whose handiwork is of a very neat and masterly description, and who are the best authorities upon all flies for the North of Ireland.

No. 1 is called *the Butcher Fly*, though it is not the fly known elsewhere as the Butcher. Tag, silver thread and light orange floss; tail, two or three fibres of tippet, blue macaw and mallard; butt, black ostrich; body, dark red claret mohair; narrow silver tinsel; hackle, the same colour as the body, lightish blue hackle at shoulder; wing, brown mallard, blue macaw ribs; black head.

No. 2. *The Judge.*—Tag, silver thread and light orange floss; tail, one topping; butt, peacock herl; body, silver tinsel; hackle, a golden-olive or yellow-orange (the colour is something between these two), red orange at shoulder, blue jay over it; wing, mixed of peacock, bustard with a few fibres of tippet, two toppings over, and blue macaw ribs; peacock herl head. A very tasty fly.

No. 3. *The McGildowny.*—Tag, as before; tail, same as No. 1; butt, peacock herl; body, two turns of light orange floss, the rest yellow mohair; narrow silver tinsel; hackle, a dirty medium brickdust red (dressed only two-thirds down), blue jay at shoulder; wing, mixed bustard, mallard, tippet (pretty plentiful), and a little peacock; head, peacock herl.

No. 4. *The Early.*—This is the same as No. 1, save that the butt is yellow mohair; the body and hackle are some two shades lighter, and there is a tippet feather for the under wing; hooks Nos. 6 and 7.

The following two flies are from Farlow's:—

No. 1. *Powell's Fancy.*—Tag, gold tinsel and orange floss; tail, a topping; butt, peacock herl; body, two turns of orange floss, the rest orange pig's wool (lighter towards tail, dark towards shoulder), gold tinsel, just above and beside it, a narrow thread of red, almost scarlet floss; hackle, bright red-orange, blue jay on shoulder; wing, gold pheasant tail, bastard bustard, brown mallard, some tippet, grey mallard stained yellow, wood-duck, red macaw ribs; black head.

No. 2. *The Grace.*—Tag, gold tinsel and yellow floss; tail, a topping; butt, black ostrich; body, dark rich ruby floss; thick gold twist; hackle, bright reddish claret, medium orange hackle at shoulder, with blue jay over it; wings, peacock, gold pheasant tail, bustard, and wood duck, one topping; blue macaw ribs; and black head; hooks Nos. 6 to 8.

THE BANN

The following four flies are also by William Doherty and Son:—

No. 1. *The Garibaldi Fly.*—This is an invention of Doherty's, and a showy-looking fly it is. It is tied in three joints; tag, silver thread and lemon floss; tail, a topping; butt, green peacock herl; first joint yellow-orange, three turns of silver thread at joint, then yellowish-olive hackle and green peacock herl above it; second joint a shade redder orange, hackle, etc., as before, the hackle a ruddier tinge in the olive; third joint same as last, with light claret hackle, blue jay at shoulder; under wing, two good-sized full-length tippet feathers, slips of brown jay on either side, a topping over all; red and blue macaw ribs; head, green peacock herl.

No. 2. *The Golden-olive Fly.*—This is a Ballyshannon pattern; at least a fly very much resembling it is used there. Tag, silver thread, and medium blue floss; tail, a topping; butt, black ostrich; body, golden-yellow floss; gold tinsel and gold thread side by side; hackle, golden-olive, blue jay at shoulder; wing, mixed bustard, grey mallard, and peacock, a few fibres of tippet and red parrot, one topping, red and blue macaw ribs; black head.

No. 3. *The Blue Jay.*—This is the Blue Doctor dressed with jay, instead of blue hackle, with a mixed wing as before, and one topping.

No. 4. *The Green Grouse.*—Tag, gold thread and reddish orange floss; tail, a topping; butt, brown ostrich; body, pea-green floss, narrow gold tinsel; hackle, grouse, yellow-olive at shoulder; wing, mixed bustard, grey mallard and tippet, one topping and blue macaw ribs; head, black ostrich; hooks from 4 to 7.

CHAPTER XII

SALMON FLIES—*continued*

List of Flies for Wales and England—List of Sea Trout Flies

THE USK

NO. 1. *The Llanover.*—This fly being the production of the late Lord Llanover, I have distinguished it by his name. It is one of the best killers on the Usk. Tag, silver twist; tail, a topping. The body is a Namsen body (see Namsen, p. 254); hackle at shoulder, a dirty smudgy coch y bondu hackle; wing, mixed brown (mottled) turkey, bastard bustard, pintail, blue, yellow, and claret swan (the first most plentiful), a topping over all, blue macaw ribs; and peacock herl head.

No. 2. Tag, silver twist; tail, a topping; body, one half orange and yellow pig's wool mixed, the other half lemon pig's wool; hackle, light orange; the hackles in all Usk and Wye flies are long and full, and dressed from head to tail; silver tinsel; wing, a pair of bittern hackles with strips of bustard, and wood-duck over them; blue macaw ribs.

No. 3. Tag, gold twist; tail, sprigs of gold pheasant sword feather and yellow macaw; body, olive and yellow pig's wool mixed, doubled gold twist; silver-grey dun hackle, blue jay at shoulder; wing, a bunch of bronze peacock herl; hooks from 6 to 8. Patterns from Farlow.

No. 4. Another fly that kills well, and which was dressed for me by one of the Martins, of Brecon, when I was there, is a yellowish buff wool body, rather full; bright yellow hackle, and wing of a pair of the under wing feathers of the snipe, or similar ones from under a hawk's wing, stained medium yellow; tail, grey mallard, stained yellow, and a kingfisher feather. This fly is varied with a lighter buff body and a grizzled blue dun hackle, or with a light green crewel tail, and unstained ribbed feathers from under the woodcock's wing.

The following four are by Peake, of Abergavenny, a well-known local maker and first-rate practical authority:

No. 1. Tag, gold tinsel; tail, two slips of red parrot and pale blue macaw; body, dirty yellow-orange crewel; reddish orange hackle (full), gold tinsel; bunch of peacock herl for wing; head of the same.

No. 2. Tag, gold tinsel; tail, a topping and two long sprigs of red macaw; body, medium brown crewel, narrow gold tinsel; hackle, red-orange with a black centre; wing, brown speckled turkey; head, peacock herl. This fly is varied with a tail as in No. 1; body, dirty brown orange; and hackle, dark grizzled blue dun.

No. 3. Tail and tag as in No. 1; body, medium orange floss, gold tinsel; hackle, lemon-yellow, with red lake at shoulder; wing, brown speckled turkey; head, black ostrich.

No. 4. Tag, gold tinsel; tail, red parrot; body, dirty yellow, inclining to orange wool, gold tinsel; hackle, lemon-yellow, scarlet hackle at shoulder; wing, a bunch of peacock herl; head, the same; hooks, about 6 or 7.

THE WYE

The Usk flies do well also on the Wye; but I add some flies which I obtained of the keeper at Builth when there, which I found first-rate killers.

No. 1. Tag, silver twist; tail, a topping, a bit of wood-duck and scarlet ibis; body rather full, of bright yellow golden floss; the hackle longish and full, and of a peculiar shade of olive-yellow, which is obtained by staining a medium blue dun a pale yellow: this gives it an olive-greenish yellow tint of a very taking look; wing two good clearly marked bittern hackles; the best bitterns' hackles to use are those of a yellowish tint, and on which the ribbed markings are most distinct; one topping over. (Plate XIX, Fig. 3.)

No. 2 is a fly of somewhat similar kind, save that the body is of a lemon-yellow floss; and the hackle a fine blue dun hackle, long and full, the bluest that can be got, fine gold tinsel; the wing and tail as before; body, fattish; hooks, about No. 6 or 7 and smaller for summer.

No. 3 is dressed after the fashion of No. 1, the body, however, being of the same colour as the flesh of a cooked salmon; the hackle, blue dun, long and full; wing and tail as in No. 1.

Add to the above the Dhoon fly, there called the Canary. See page 270 for the dressing of it.

THE DOVEY OR DEIFI

No. 1. *The Welshman's Fairy.*—Tag, gold tinsel and orange floss; tail, a topping, and gallina stained pink; butt, black ostrich; body, red wool; silver tinsel; hackle, claret and golden-olive laid together and wound on simultaneously;* pale blue dun hackle (unstained) at shoulders; wing, strips of mallard, brown mottled turkey, bastard bustard, gallina, pale dirty pink swan; blue macaw ribs; black head.

No. 2. *The Captain.*—This is a jointed fly. Tag, gold thread; tail, a topping and tippet; butt, black ostrich; body, in four joints. The first joint is composed one half of dark orange, and the other of dark red floss, just below the joint a few turns of fine gold thread, above this a small cock of the rock feather put on as a hackle. The next joint is bright yellow and dark red floss, gold thread, and cock of the rock hackle as before. The third and fourth joints are of yellow and black floss, gold thread, and cock of the rock hackle as before, at the shoulders blue jay; wing, brown mottled turkey with brown mallard over it, blue macaw ribs and black head.

Add to these two flies, "*Powell's Fancy*" (see the Bush, p. 309) and "*The Baker,*" page 252, dressed smallish, and there are four killers for the Dovey. Hooks from 6 to 10, or even smaller in low water. Patterns from Farlow's.

THE CONWAY

The following patterns were sent to me by C. Blackwall, Esq., the secretary of the Conway Club; and the patterns may, therefore, be thoroughly relied on. They are all capital general flies, and would kill on many rivers:—

No. 1. Tag, silver thread and medium blue floss; tail, sprigs of yellow swan, wood duck, and Indian jay (the blue out of the wing); butt, black ostrich; body, one-third yellow floss, the rest olive-green with a few strands of yellow pig's wool, silver tinsel; lightish claret hackle, blue jay at shoulder; wing, two jungle cock (medium length), sprigs of tippet, wood duck (plenty), a strip of red swan or red macaw, golden pheasant's tail (plenty), blue macaw ribs; black head.

No. 2. *The Blackwall.*—Tag, as before; tail, a topping and a small blue chatterer feather; butt, black ostrich; body, half medium orange floss, half redder orange mohair, broadish silver tinsel; hackle, claret a shade darker than No. 1, short wood duck hackle at shoulder; wings, two medium jungle cock, tippet sprigs, slips of wood duck, two toppings; blue macaw ribs; black head. This fly is Mr. Blackwall's own fancy, said to be very deadly, and I have given his name to it.

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* This will be found easiest to do either by stripping one side of the hackle, or by preparing the hackles and laying one within the other.—F. F.

No. 3. Tag, as before; tail, a topping with slips of wood-duck; butt, black ostrich; body, medium orange floss; hackle, coch y bondu stained claret, blue jay at shoulder; wing fibres of tippet, slips of wood-duck, golden pheasant's tail over, blue and red macaw ribs; black head (the blue jay to be tied outside the wing). This is the old Conway pattern.

No. 4. Tag, silver thread, and yellow floss; tail, yellow swan, tippet and wood duck sprigs; butt, black ostrich herl; body, lightish medium blue floss; hackle, the same, tinsel silver; a little short wood duck tied on at breast hacklewise, also a tippet feather as a hackle over it; wing, two medium jungle cock feathers, slips of tippet, golden pheasant tail over this, and short wood duck slips over that; black head.

No. 5. Tag, silver thread and medium blue floss; tail, a topping and some wood duck; butt, black ostrich; body, silver tinsel; dark claret hackle with a strand of yellow silk laid on under and beside it, blue jay at shoulder; wing, plenty of wood-duck slips, tippet sprigs over, brown mallard and golden pheasant tail over, a sprig or two of yellow-olive swan, blue macaw ribs; black head.

These flies may be varied in size to suit the water, and will be found quite sufficient for the river. The sizes sent to me vary from 5 to 9.

THE TOWEY AND TIVEY OR TEIFI

One or two friends, of whom I expected to obtain flies of these rivers, having failed me, I was obliged to ask assistance in the columns of the *Field*, and a great many flies were sent me. It would be impossible to describe them all. I have, therefore, made a selection of those which are best spoken of. Lord Llanover very kindly sent me some patterns. I append three of them.

No. 1. Tail, the red rump-feather of the golden pheasant, and the extreme point of blue jay's feather; body, yellow crewel, silver tinsel; silver-grey hackle (longish fibre); wings, a bunch of coppery peacock herl. The other two flies are very similar, only the bodies are orange crewel, and the hackles a trifle darker, and the tinsel gold. All these flies kill well also on the Usk.

The two following flies are from Mr. Harrison, of Lampeter :—

No. 1. *The Gamekeeper.*—Tag, gold tinsel and peacock herl ; tail, a topping and some golden pheasant sword feather fibres ; the body is somewhat difficult to decide on, being well washed ; it appears to be of a red-brown or burnt sienna-coloured mohair, gold tinsel ; hackle, greenish olive, darkish blue at shoulder ; wing, a short tippet and golden pheasant's rump feather, over this bustard, with golden pheasant's tail (the streaked feather), the latter much predominating ; head, peacock herl.

No. 2 is a pattern of Mr. Harrison's own devising. Tag, silver tinsel ; tail, a small tippet feather ; body, two turns of yellow crewel, the rest of light red crewel, the usual colour of blotting-paper, silver tinsel ; lightish brown hackle, medium blue at shoulder ; wings, blue hackle point same colour as the shoulder, golden pheasant's tail (the streaked feather).

The following is one of three sent me by Mr. Whitlow, of Twickenham. Tag, gold tinsel ; tail, red parrot ; butt, black ostrich ; body, olive-yellow ; narrow gold tinsel ; hackle, light brown-red, blue jay at shoulder ; wings, light dun turkey with a few dark blurred spots on it ; head, black ostrich.

Mr. Whitlow also sent a somewhat similar fly with apple-green body and hen pheasant's wing. Hooks 5, 6, and 7, and smaller for fine water.

The Butcher (No. 2 dressing, p. 252) kills well also in the Tivey.

THE CORTHY

The following two flies for the Corthy were also forwarded by Mr. Harrison ; and the patterns are good both for salmon and sewin :—

No. 1. Tag, silver tinsel ; tail, scarlet ibis ; body, blotting-paper red crewel, narrow silver tinsel ; hackle, pale lemon ; wings, light speckled turkey stained a bright ochre-yellow.

No. 2. Tag, silver tinsel ; tail, scarlet ibis ; body, light yellow crewel, tinsel and hackle as before ; wing, two slips of blue macaw and two of white-tipped black turkey. Both of the above are strange, unnatural, inharmonious sort of flies ; but there is no accounting for taste, especially of fishes. Hooks 9 to 11.

THE DEE

The accompanying flies were sent to me by Mr. Townshend, of Wrexham, who obtained them for me from Colonel T., a noted angler on the Dee. The Dee flies are very sober and plain.

No. 1. Tag, gold tinsel; tail, a small tippet feather; body, bronze peacock herl, gold tinsel; brown-red hackle at shoulder; wing, a mixture of brown turkey and thin peacock herl fibres from near the eye of the feather; head, peacock herl.

No. 2. No tail; same body, coch y bondu hackle; wing, two short hackles, crimson-red with a lake tinge, set on either side, with a bunch of long fibres from a cock pheasant's tail between them; peacock herl head.

No. 3. Tag, gold tinsel; tail, sprigs of tippet; body, as before; dark olive-brown hackle at shoulder; wing, bunch of fibres from rump of speckled brown hen with fibres of tippet on either side; head, as before.

No. 4. Tail, a scrap of teal slightly stained olive; body, medium brown mohair, silver thread; coch y bondu hackle at shoulder; wing, mottled peacock, with a few fibres of the same stained yellow for ribs; head, peacock's herl. Hooks from 5 to 8.

THE ESK (BORDER)

Mr. Rowell, the tackle-maker of Carlisle, whose name I have already favourably mentioned in connection with the Annan, also sends me patterns for the Esk and the Eden, and the commendation bestowed upon his Annan flies may be also extended to these.

No. 1. Tag, gold tinsel; tail, gold pheasant saddle sprigs; body, a medium purple floss; silver tinsel, tolerably stout; hackle, coch y bondu; under it, and tied on at the shoulder, is a wad of bright orange crewel well picked out; wing, some teal sprigs with light dun turkey over split into sprigs.

No. 2. Much the same fly, only the body is bright medium (inclining to darkish) blue, with a few sprigs of blue, and one or two of bright yellow in the wing. All the rest as before.

No. 3. Tag, gold tinsel; tail, some tippet sprigs; body, golden yellow floss, with orange crewel picked out at shoulder; hackle, coch y bondu with an olive tinge; silver tinsel; wing, two peacock slips brownish at butt. Hooks 6 and 7.

THE EDEN

Is one of the finest of our English salmon rivers, and if properly treated, would be one of the most productive. It still produces a great quantity of salmon, and affords a good deal of sport, though the spoon is found more deadly even than the fly in it. Mr. Rowell supplies these patterns, as in the last river.

No. 1 I call *The Chimney Sweep ;* it is a very striking fly, as it is the only thoroughly black fly I ever saw, but that it is a favourite on the Eden Mr. Rowell vouches, as he says it will kill when none of the others will, and I certainly shall try it elsewhere. The tail is a single topping ; the tinsel medium silver ; but the body, hackle, and wings are all black. The hackle is longish in fibre, but is dressed only from the shoulder, not down the body. The wing, two slips of swan as black as a coal. It should be a first-rate night fly.

No. 2. Tag, silver tinsel ; tail, a topping ; body, lightish orange floss. Silver tinsel ; hackle, black, and dressed only at shoulder as before ; under wing, two slips of teal, upper two slips of dark dun (cinnamon) turkey. In default, gled or even Monal pheasant will do.

No. 3. Tag, gold tinsel ; tail, a topping ; body, lightish blue floss ; silver tinsel ; hackle dressed as before of darkish medium blue, and under it a wad of yellow crewel picked out at shoulder ; under wing, some teal, upper mixed light peacock, gold pheasant tail and dark dun turkey, with a few sprigs of claret and yellow swan.

No. 4. Tag, gold tinsel, tail, some tippet ; body, ruby floss ; silver tinsel ; a wad of darkish medium red pig's wool tied in and picked out at the shoulder, with a coch y bondu hackle over it ; under wing, gold pheasant rump, upper mixed black (not very bright), gold pheasant tail, cock pheasant tail, sprigs of blue, yellow, red, and green.

No. 5. Tag, gold tinsel and some orange-yellow crewel ; tail, the tip of a medium claret hackle ; body, floss herl, a very difficult colour to describe. It is a dark pink-red, not so bright as ruby, but a sort of faded ruby ; silver tinsel ; lightish claret hackle half-way down the body ; under wing, a tippet, rather conspicuous, and a saddle feather over (rather thinly) ; sprigs of teal, gold pheasant tail, bright blue and red. All the bodies of these flies are dressed rather sparely, and the hooks are about 6 and 7.

THE TAWE AND TORRIDGE

These three patterns are from Farlow's :—

No. 1. Tag, silver tinsel ; tail, a topping and red and blue macaw; butt, black ostrich; body, three turns of medium orange floss, the rest of darkish blue pig's wool; broad silver tinsel; medium blue hackle, blue jay at shoulder; wing, a darkish blue hackle, slice of brick-red swan and darkish grey speckled turkey; black head.

No. 2. Tag, silver thread and ruby floss; tail, a topping; butt, black ostrich; body, palish yellow wool; medium claret hackle, a light orange hackle (inclining rather to pale brick-red) at shoulder; wing, brown speckled turkey; peacock, a few sprigs of bastard bustard and grey mallard, slightly brown at tips, over all; black head.

No. 3. Tag, gold tinsel; tail, a topping; butt, black ostrich body, bright canary-coloured floss, gold tinsel; hackle the same colour, blue jay on shoulder; wing, light and mixed sprigs of bustard, tippet, wood duck, gallina over, topping, and blue macaw ribs; black head. In the early spring, a Butcher (see p. 252) dressed smallish is a first-rate fly for these rivers. Hooks from 5 to 9.

SEA TROUT FLIES

"Well, Mr. Francis," methinks I hear the reader remark, "you have given us a rare long list of salmon flies, but what about sea trout flies?"

Sea trout flies are a sort of connecting link between common trout and salmon flies; and first I will give you a list of flies used more or less on the Tweed, where they are termed whitling flies, and it shall go hard but some of these flies shall kill sea trout wherever they are found to rise in Scotland. The sizes of sea trout flies run from the No. 12 hook in the salmon scale down to about three sizes smaller.

No. 1. Of all the sea trout flies I know of this is about the best. It will kill almost anywhere; either in Scotland, Ireland, or England. Tail, a short tuft of orange-yellow floss silk; body, a dark ruddy brown or brown-red (something the colour of dark red hair) pig's wool, fine silver twist; hackle, coch y bondu (red with black centre); wing, two strips of bright teal. Three sizes of this fly should always be kept on hand, from the largest to the smallest sea trout size.

No. 2. Much the same dressing; the body bright orange with a black hackle. Medium size.

No. 3 Tail as before; body, lower half, dark red; upper half black; hackle, coch y bondu, the black tint of the hackle predominating; wing, teal. Medium size.

No. 4. Tail as before; body, black ostrich herl, silver thread; hackle, coch y bondu; wing, bright, well-marked teal. Two sizes.

No. 5. Tail, short golden floss; body, ruddy orange, gold thread; red hackle, with a scrap of black at the butt of the feather; wing, the brown speckled feathers from a woodcock's tail, or the rump of a brown speckled hen. Medium size.

No. 6. Tail as before; body, half dirty orange; upper half black, fine gold thread; hackle, coch y bondu; wing, two slips from a dun feather, either landrail or the lighter part of partridge tail. The smaller sizes.

No. 7. *The White Tip*.—I never did a great deal with this fly, but it is a standard Tweed pattern, so I give it. Tail, short orange floss; body, black ostrich herl, silver thread; hackle, dark coch y bondu, with only a little red at the tips of the fibres; wing, two shreds from the black and white wing feather of a wild drake, three-fourths black and one-fourth a bright white tip.

If one of these seven flies do not stir the sea trout on the Tweed and many another Scotch river, the angler may go home, as far as sea trout are concerned. These are all dressed by Jamie Wright, of Sprouston, on whom my benison, for they are perfection.

Here is a batch for the west of Ireland, which I got years ago from McGowan, of Bruton Street, Berkeley Square, formerly a light of science at Ballyshannon, but now a Saga on Norwegian mysteries. They are capital patterns, wonderfully tied, perfect miniature salmon flies, and for killing they are not at all easy to beat; I have killed "wales o' fish" with some of them, particularly with No. 1.

No. 1. Tail, a whisk from the cock of the rock's breast feather; body, light claret-red pig's wool; hackle, the same, fineish gold tinsel; under wing, a fragment of golden pheasant tippet, over it brown mallard; black head. Medium size.

No. 2. Tail, sprigs of golden pheasant tippet, and teal; body, dirty reddish brown (almost the colour of dark cow's hair), gold thread; red hackle with a black butt to it from the shoulder; wing, mixed, bustard predominating, with fibres of gallina, two or three sprigs of golden pheasant tippet, and sword feather with peacock's breast; head, peacock's herl. Large size.

No. 3. Tag, pale blue floss ; tail, sprigs of golden pheasant tippet, and fine blue macaw points ; body, golden yellow floss, gold thread ; hackle, dark olive, with one turn of jay at shoulder ; wing, mixed golden pheasant tail and tippet, brown mallard and gallina ; head, black. Small size.

No. 4. Tag, gold thread and orange floss ; tail, a small orange toucan feather ; body, dark blue floss ; black hackle, fine silver tinsel ; wing, gold pheasant tail (the streaked feather), and tippet, with some teal over ; head, black. Small size.

No. 5. Tag, silver twist and ruby floss ; tail, mixed sprigs of golden pheasant tippet, gallina, and fine blue macaw sprigs ; body, dark blue floss, gold thread ; black hackle, with a red-brown one at shoulder ; wing, bustard, with fibres of gallina and golden pheasant tippet over ; head, black. Size largish.

No. 6. Tag, gold thread and a bit of lemon-yellow crewel ; tail, red parrot ; body, medium purple claret pig's wool picked out, silver tinsel ; red hackle only at shoulder ; wing, bright teal ; head, black. Size medium.

Here is a number of patterns for the west and north-west of Ireland, collected by myself on the spot. I have found them to be first-rate killers, and do not hesitate strongly to commend them. The first is a capital fly for Erris, and will slaughter not only white trout, but when the water is low will kill salmon. It was given to me by a gentleman who had lived for years at Bangor, and who had fished all the streams in that part incessantly. I killed baskets of white trout with it, and although the river was so low that there had not been a salmon killed for weeks, on the first morning that I was there we went out on the Owenmore, played and lost one salmon and killed another of eleven pounds.

No. 1. Tail, a few sprigs of blue jay ; body, two turns of medium blue floss, the rest black pig's wool mingled with a few fibres of lightish brown or dirty grey fur to give the body a sort of rusty appearance, silver thread ; black hackle ; wing, plain, from the jay's wing, choose a bit which is dark towards the butt. Two sizes.

No. 2. Tag, golden-yellow floss ; tail, sprigs of red and green parrot, and golden pheasant tippet ; body, black pig's wool, silver thread ; black hackle, with two turns of jay at shoulder ; wing, mixed, of brown and grey mallard, fibres of golden pheasant with four or five sprigs of blue macaw. Size, full. With this fly I once killed nearly a hundredweight of white trout in one day on the Doohullah lakes. It is a great Connemara favourite.

No. 3. Tail, a small topping; body, one turn of ruby floss, the rest of black floss, silver thread; black hackle only one-third down; wing, a darkish bit from a jay's wing. Size small. Good in the Newport river, and most of the rivers and lakes in that neighbourhood.

No. 4. Tag, gold tinsel; tail, a sprig or two of brown mallard; body, dark blue wool well picked out; red hackle only at shoulder; wing, from jay's wing-feather, with a light brownish tinge preferred. Size small.

No. 5. Tag, silver thread; tail, grey mallard; body, apple-green floss; red hackle, silver thread; wing, mottled woodcock. The last two flies are good on the Lennan and at Gweedore, and generally on the north-west of Donegal. Largish size.

No. 6. Tag, light orange floss; tail, golden pheasant tippet sprigs; body, medium blue pig's wool picked out slightly; black hackle (only at shoulder), silver thread; wing, brown mallard, small speckled gallina, a few shreds of red parrot and blue macaw. A capital Connemara pattern. I have done very well with it at Ballynahinch. Medium size.

No. 7. Tag, silver tinsel and light orange floss; tail, blue jay and yellow macaw; body, lightish blue pig's wool; hackle, the same colour, silver thread; wing, jay's wing—a lightish feather. Connemara. Medium size.

No. 8. Tag, as before; tail, jay and tippet; body, bright pea-green floss, silver tinsel; red hackle; wing as before. Connemara. Medium size.

No. 9. Tag, gold tinsel; tail, golden pheasant tippet sprigs; body, light orange floss; wing and hackle, a grouse hackle left full and long on back and clipped on the breast. Connemara. Medium size.

Four patterns from Nicholson of Galway:—

No. 1. Tag, silver tinsel and orange floss; tail, tippet and blue and green sprigs; body, blue mohair, rough; hackle, red; wing, jay's wing.

No. 2. Tag, as before; tail, as before; body, yellow mohair, rough silver thread; wing, jay's wing—darkish feather.

No. 3. Tag and tail as before; body, two-thirds light claret mohair, one-third at shoulder dirty yellow; black hackle; wing, dark jay with some tippet over.

No. 4. Tag, silver tinsel, dark blue floss; tail, tippet, and sword feather with yellow sprigs; body, black mohair with a little dark red picked out at the shoulder, silver tinsel; hackle, black; wing, dark jay, and some tippet sprigs over. All these flies have black heads, and are dressed of large size.

I had some patterns sent me specially for Erris rivers and lakes, more particularly for Maxwell's river—the Ballycroy—a very famous white trout river, in which my friend Mr. S., who rented it, as I have before stated, for some years, killed magnificent baskets of white trout, many of them running up often to five and six pounds' weight. Four of these flies are very much alike; the bodies vary a little in the shade of orange; the tags are all silver tinsel and ruby floss; the tails a sprig or two of golden pheasant's tail; they all have the somewhat unusual appendage to a white trout fly, of a black ostrich butt. The bodies are pig's wool, more or less of a red or yellow orange, gold thread. One of them is half orange and half black. The hackles are black; wings of two, brown mallard; in the other two a bit of peacock's wing or hen pheasant's is thrown in. The fifth fly is a very pretty one: no tail or tag; body, lake floss, then orange floss, and then lake again; hackle, a yellow olive; black hackle at shoulder, amidst which on the breast a fibre or two of dark blue and claret mohair is tied in; wing, landrail and brown mallard, with a small topping over. I should think this fly would be in request. It is a very pretty pattern—the body smacks a little of the Moy. They all have black heads, and are of medium size.

Here are half a dozen for Lough Currane (or Waterville). They were sent me by Haynes, of Cork, whose small flies are perfection.

No. 1. Tag, a few turns of gold thread; tail, a few sprigs of tippet; body, dark sandy red (red hair red), gold thread. Hackle, red—when held up to the light golden olive; wing, a darkish bit of bustard. Largish size.

No. 2. Tag, and tail as before; body, very dark claret pig's wool, gold thread; very dark blue hackle, a nice streaky bit of cock pheasant. Largish size.

No. 3. Tag and tail as before; body, claret, two shades lighter than the last fly; hackle, the same colour, gold thread; argus hackle at shoulder (grouse may be substituted in default); wing, well mottled hen pheasant; black head. Same size as the last two flies.

No. 4. Tag and tail as before; body, medium brown pig's wool, gold thread ; medium blue hackle ; wing, speckled cock pheasant. One size smaller than the last three.

No. 5. Tag, gold tinsel ; tail, brown mallard ; body, dark brown claret, gold thread ; black hackle with medium brown hackle at shoulder ; wing, a few fibres of speckled cock pheasant, and over them dark jay's wing ; black head. Same size as first three.

No. 6. Tag, gold tinsel ; tail, brown mallard ; body, three turns of orange floss, the rest black ostrich herl ; black hackle ; wing, dark cinnamon, partridge tail is hardly long enough in the fibre—there is an Indian pheasant which has the feather. One size smaller.

I now give half a dozen patterns for the Caragh, which will kill on most of the Kerry rivers. They are also by Haynes, and are not inferior to the last.

No. 1. Tail, two grey mallard strands ; medium blue floss body, silver tinsel ; hackle same colour as body ; wing, jay's wing. Small size.

No. 2. Tail, three strands of brown mallard ; body, dirty yellow-orange, gold thread ; medium blue hackle ; light jay's wing.

No. 3. Tag, silver thread ; tail, three strands of bustard ; body, one-third medium orange floss, the rest silver-grey fur, silver thread ; hackle, smoky blue dun ; wing, darkish jay's wing.

No. 4. Tag, gold tinsel ; tail, brown mallard ; body, one-third golden-yellow floss, the rest hare's ear ; hackle, red (light transparent olive when held up to light) ; wing, jay's wing, with dark butt to the feather.

No. 5. Mallard tail ; medium orange floss body, gold thread ; wing and hackle, light tawny grouse hackle, only at the shoulders, and clipped on the breast.

No. 6. Tail, grey mallard ; body, lightish olive-green pig's wool roughish, fine gold thread ; wing, a rather light coloured bit of speckled cock pheasant tail, a wad of the same being tied on at the breast as a hackle, and then clipped. All these flies are of the smallest size used for sea trout.

With such a list of sea trout flies as I have given in the last half-dozen pages, scarcely any lake or river in the kingdom can fail to be well suited.

CHAPTER XIII

TACKLE MAKING AND FLY DRESSING

On Making Tackle, Knotting, etc.—How to Dress the Trout Fly—The Method of Dressing the Salmon Fly

BEFORE going into the mysteries of fly dressing, I may say a few words upon tackle making generally. One of the first acts the tyro will attempt to perform for himself, will be the lashing on of a hook. This process is exceedingly simple, and may be very quickly performed with a little practice. Take a hook, a thread of gut, and some fine but strong silk; wax it well either with white or cobbler's wax; bite the gut slightly at the extreme end, so as to flatten it and prevent its slipping; then lay the gut and the end of the silk against the shank of the hook, the ends reaching rather short of the bend; then, holding both in place with the bend and shank of the hook between the left finger and thumb, take the silk in the right, and wind it firmly round the gut and hook, commencing at the head or end of the hook, and laying coil beside coil until the gut is covered and bound securely to the hook; then fasten off the silk either by two half hitches, as shown in the right-hand tie in Fig. 7 of Plate III, page 66, or by the method given on the left-hand side. These cuts render any further explanation needless. I generally prefer the two half hitches, as, although perhaps less neat, they are more secure. The coils should of course be drawn tight, and the loose end of the silk snipped off. The lashing may then be touched with shellac varnish (see Recipes and Notabilia, p. 357), and the hook put aside in a dry place till required for use. It is always desirable, where you use shellac varnish, to employ it some time before using the tackle, as, if not quite dry, the varnish turns to an opaque white colour when the tackle is used.

The next thing the young aspirant to skill in tackle making will attempt, will be in tying threads of gut together for lines. Of course the selection of the gut depends upon the purpose it is to be put to, but it is common, both for bottom and fly-fishing lines, to taper them; that is, the stoutest gut is reserved for the upper part of the line, or that to which the running or reel line is tied, and the finer for the part near the hook, and it graduates in stoutness from one to the other. Gut should be moistened in luke-warm water (if time can be spared, cold is better), before it is tied; and the older the gut is the more thoroughly soaked it must be, and the more carefully and closely the knots must be drawn together, as it gets brittle with age. To tie two threads of gut together, place two ends side by side, overlapping each other for a couple of inches or so, and then tie the knot shown in Fig. 3, Plate III, page 66. Draw it closely home, and snip off the short ends. This knot is generally secure enough, if it be properly drawn home; but to render it more secure, I generally touch the knot, when the gut is quite dry, with a drop of shellac varnish. If, however, this be not thought secure enough, then it is usual to take another turn in the fold, as shown in Fig. 4. The double folds, though they make rather a large knot, render a slip impossible. There is another way used when dropper flies are needed to be fastened in, and that is shown in Fig. 2 in the same plate, but I have noted that elsewhere. Some people whip the ends of the gut on to the main line so as to secure the knot, but the whipping always frays off, and is practically useless. In securing the gut line to the reel line, it is usual to have a loop at the end of the gut. The end of the reel line having merely a knot in it, take the end of the reel line and pass it through the loop, as shown in Fig. 5, Plate III, page 66. But if you wish to be able to undo the line with ease and quickness when you require to change or have finished fishing, then it is advisable to use the slip knot shown in Fig. 6, when by pulling the loose end of the line smartly, the hitch is released.* In making a loop in a gut line, I usually prefer the knotted loop, as shown in Fig. 6, to the whipped one, shown in Fig. 5. It is less conspicuous when properly made and drawn close, and it is more secure, as loop whipping often comes undone. Always try all hooks and gut before using them, as it is exceedingly vexatious to lose a good fish for the want of this precaution.

And now as to fly tying.

The Trout Fly.—Some persons trust entirely to their tackle makers for their flies, and will not go to the trouble of tying or learning to tie, their trout flies. I myself trust to my tackle maker for my *general* supply of flies, but there are times when the capability of tying a fly will secure one a good day's fishing, and when, but for the power to do so, the angler might see fish rising but be unable to bring them to hook. As it will often happen that the angler will desire to tie a fly by the river side, it will be well that he should learn to tie them by the use of his fingers alone. It may be more difficult at first, but the best tyers (professional tyers) very seldom use anything else, and it is a mere matter of practice. Most amateurs, however, prefer to use a vice to hold the hook, and the vice for trout flies is a small brass table vice, and can, with spring tweezers, also a common requisite, be bought at most respectable tackle makers. The only other implements required are a neat sharp-pointed pair of scissors and a dubbing needle, which last should be a stout needle, fixed in a handle like a bradawl, and with a rounded blunt point, so as not to cut the silk when used to pick out the fibres of dubbing.

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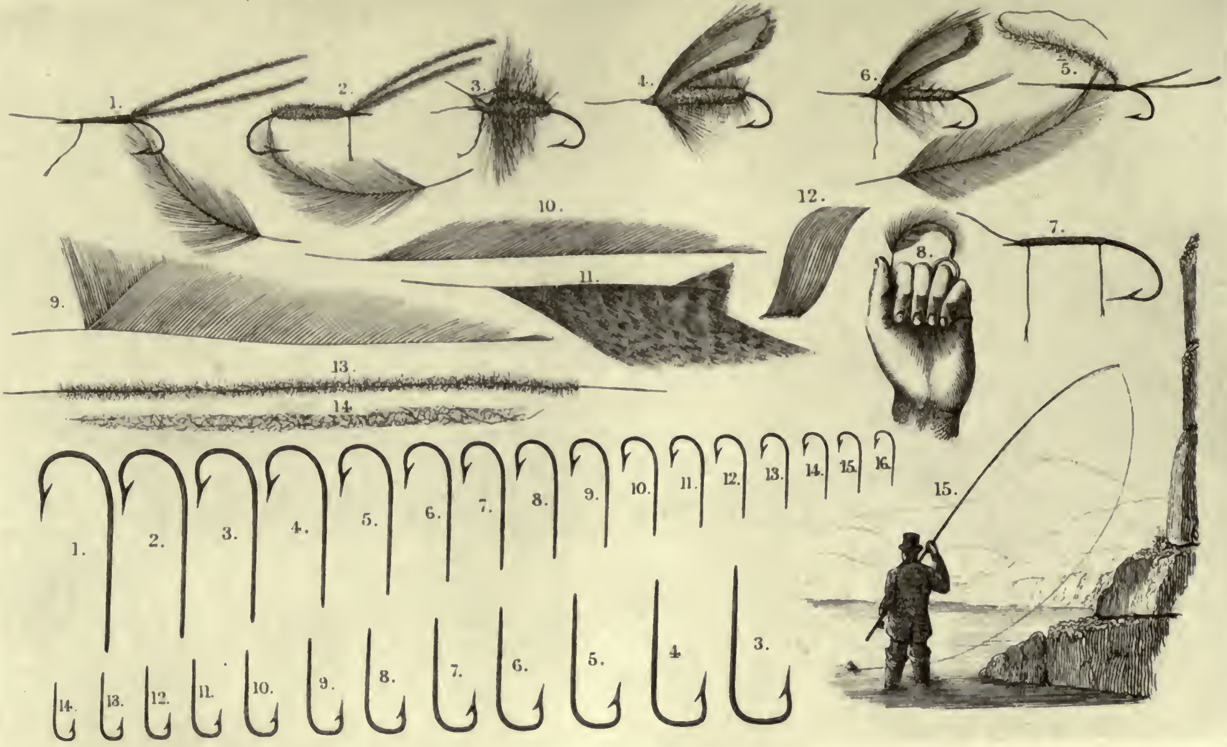
* Personally, I would not be found dead, so to speak, with such knots as these on my line. In my opinion the figure of eight knot is the right one for the purpose.—Ed.

The easiest fly to dress is, of course, the simple palmer. Suppose we take the common red palmer. Choose hook and gut; lash on the gut with the finest and strongest silk you can procure in the ordinary way, only do not begin quite at the head or end of the hook, leave space enough for two or three turns of the silk bare of lashing in order to finish the fly off at; having lashed on the gut down towards the bend, take either a piece of crewel or silk, or even two or three (according as you require the substance of the fly to be) peacock's or ostrich herls, break off the weak points, lay the herls together, and tie the ends in a mass on to the bend of the hook (see Plate XXI, Fig. 1); then select a hackle from the neck of a red cock—choose a two-year-old cock in preference to a young one, as his colours will be better and his feathers stronger. As your fly is to be larger or smaller, and you need the fibre to be longer or shorter, so you will choose one nearer to or farther from the head; having settled this, prepare the hackle by snipping a little bit off on each side near the tip (see Plate XXI, Fig. 10), so that the fibres may not be tied in. Then comes the question whether you desire your palmer to be dressed with hackle all over from head to tail, whether it shall be dressed half-way down, or only at the shoulder of the fly. If the hackle is to go from tail to head, it is tied on at the same time as the herl. If not, then the silk must be warped up from the tail to the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TROUT FLY DRESSING, ETC.

required spot; and having tied on the tip of the hackle, you must carry the silk on to the shoulder of the fly, and fix it with a half hitch.* Then take hold of the peacock's herls and wind them round and round the hook side by side, up to the silk, when seize them down with two or three turns of the silk and a half hitch (see Plate XXI, Fig. 2); cut off the refuse herl, not too closely; and touch the fastening with a drop of shellac varnish to make all secure. Then take hold of the hackle either with the fingers or spring tweezers, and taking care that the fibres point in the right direction, wind it carefully on up to the head of the fly, until it reaches the silk, pressing the fibres down so that they point tailwards while doing so; then seize it down and tie off as in the case of the herl (see Plate XXI, Fig. 3); cut off the refuse, not too closely, leaving a scrap of the quill still on, which lap over and tie down firmly, finishing off with the silk to the end of the hook; snip the silk off and touch the tie with varnish, and you have a red palmer.

Of course all other palmers are tied in the same way. When they are very large and thick-fibred, two or more hackles are used. Some tie them both on together, and wind them on at the same time; and some use one up first, and then tie on another. The first plan is the best.

A winged fly is simply a palmer with the addition of wings, and with three-quarters of the legs taken away (Fig. 4 shows the wings simply added). For the legs of an ordinary fly, prepare a small piece of hackle of the requisite length of fibre; tie the end on at that part of the hook where the thorax of the fly would be. This may be done either when the hook is being tied on to the gut, or afterwards, when the body is being warped on, a turn of the silk being taken over the herl or dubbing to secure it while the hackle is being tied on. The silk is then wound up to the shoulder; the body worked up to it and tied off; two or three turns of the hackle are then taken, by which time that too will reach the shoulder, and can be tied off, when the wing is put on, and all is finished. But be sure not to overhackle your fly—it makes it lumpy and unnatural; as a rule, nine fly tyers in ten overdo this. No fly has more than six legs, and the imitation is none the more faithful for having sixty. Some flies have the hackle put on from tail to head, like a palmer or the sedge fly, as I have shown; others have this same make, but the hackle is much more thinly laid on. When this is the case, strip off the fibres from one side, and only tie on the single side left on the quill (see Plate XXI, Fig. 10). Be sure you strip off the right side, or you will find the hackle will not roll on. To tie on the wing, select carefully a fragment of some feather, as the wing of jay, pheasant, starling, or blackbird, and strip it off neatly, taking care not to split or separate the fibres. The wing being held between one finger and thumb, the butt ends of the fibres are pinched together by the other, so as to compress them without, if possible, bending or doubling up the wing (see Plate XXI, Fig. 12). This is then laid to the head of the hook and set in the direction it is desirable to make it stand, and two or three turns of the silk taken over it, the silk being then fastened off in the usual way.

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* This is one way, and the one commonly adopted. My own plan, however, is to lash in the tip of the hackle while I am tying the hook to the gut, when the hackle is to be either from the middle of the body or at the shoulder only: this plan makes the body less clumsy. Of course, if it is to run from head to tail—or tail to head rather—the hackle should be tied in at the same time as the herl or crewel. As it is very liable to break and the body then comes to pieces, to prevent this, some persons spin the herls round on the silk by twirling them together; then turning them on the hook, silk and all, and avoiding the hackle, carry silk and herl to the head simultaneously, and tie off the herl with the silk without trouble, and snip off the end.—F. F.

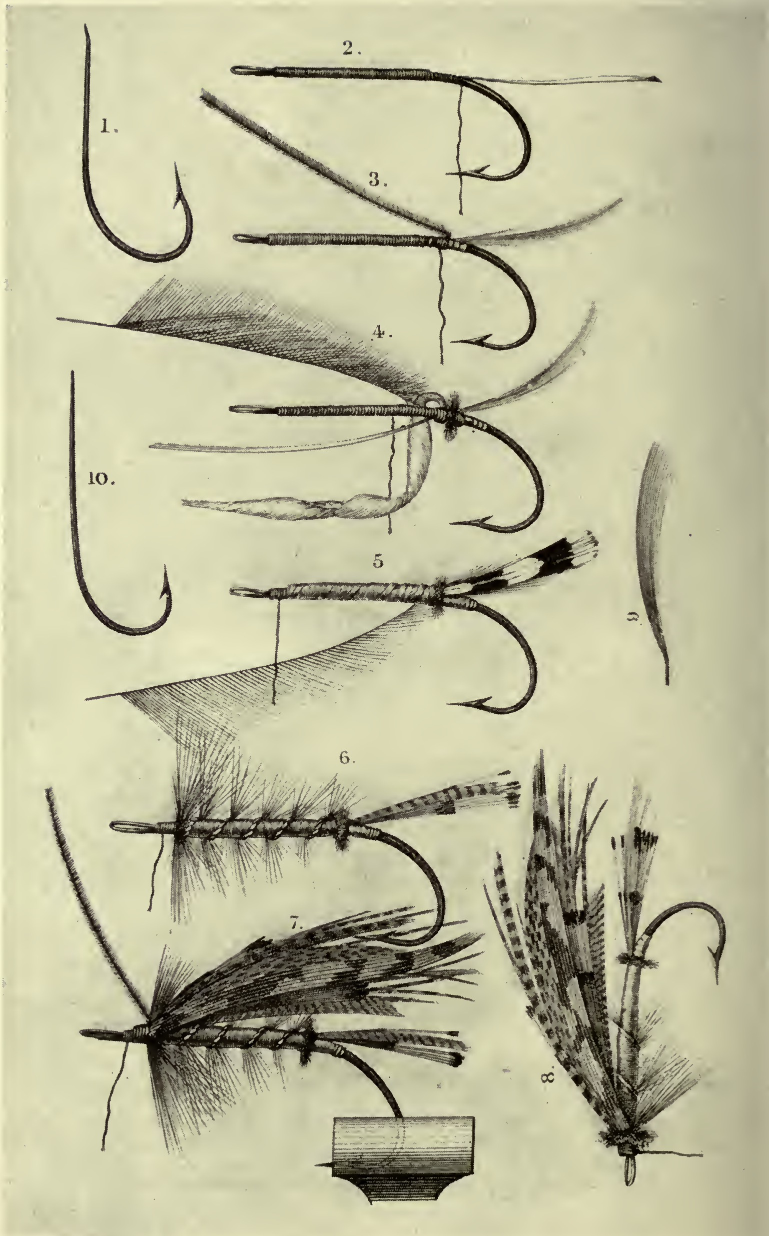
If a pair of wings are to be set on, it is as well to pick a strip of two separate feathers from both wings of the bird; by this means the feathers will set properly, and each wing of the fly will have the bright and glossy side outwards, and exposed to the gaze of the fish. Lay the strips side by side, and hold them between the finger and thumb. Then nip the butts of the feathers with the other finger and thumb, so as to get the wing into as good a shape as possible for tying on. Lay the feathers to the hook, and take two or three turns of the silk firmly over them to secure them, and if the set of the wings be satisfactory, part them with a needle, and clip off the refuse. It is always *advisable* to make flies not less than twelve hours before using, so as to allow the varnish to set. Some flies require tails, and some tinsel to mark the joints of the fly. When this is the case, after lashing on the gut and taking one half hitch to secure it, lay the tail to the hook just above the bend—it is usually composed of two or three fibres of some feather—and lap it on securely. Tie in the tinsel with the dubbing (see Plate XXI, Fig. 5); and after having wound on the dubbing and fastened if off, wind the tinsel on spirally, with a gap between each turn, and tie off in the same way as the dubbing. A complete fly of this kind is shown in Fig. 6. In some flies it is the custom to wind on the tinsel the reverse way to the hackle, and by winding it over the hackle the hackle is bound on very securely indeed, which if it be a weak one is very advantageous.

As various materials are used for the bodies or dubbing of trout flies, different methods of applying them must be adopted. Where herl, or quill, or silk is used, the process is tolerably simple; but fur of some kind—as hare's ear, water-rat's or moles's fur, etc.—is occasionally used, and when this is the case, the following plan is adopted: Pick out as much fur as is required; break it up and pull it well to mix it thoroughly; distribute it in a little row or heap along the palm of the hand; then rub it backwards and forwards between the hands, or with two fingers, until it hangs together in something like consistency (see Plate XXI, Fig. 14). Then, the silk being well waxed, lay the fur along it, and twirl the silk between the finger and thumb, so as to twist the dubbing round it and incorporate it with the silk (Fig. 13). Wind the dubbing on as high up the hook as may be required; then, detaching and pulling off any surplus dubbing, finish the silk off in the usual way and touch with varnish. With the dubbing needle pick out the stray hairs and such of the fur as may seem superfluous, trimming off with a keen pair of scissors (taking care in these rather delicate processes not to sever the silken thread), until the body is satisfactory in its proportions. When fur dubbing is used, the silk is often apt to get too frayed for tying off the hackle and wing, and some difficulty is experienced in tying in the tip of the hackle. The latter process can, as I have said, be carried out when lashing the gut on, so as to avoid the needless return of the silk up towards the head of the fly. I prefer this plan myself. The dubbing can then be wound on, the single thread tied off, the hackle wound over it, the same thread tying off the hackle and wing afterwards. But such as may prefer it can use a double thread, by commencing to lap on the gut in the middle of the silk, beginning with a half hitch, and leaving half the silk hanging down at the head, and so wind on to the tail with the other half (see Plate XXI, Fig. 7) the tail thread being used to work the dubbing, while the upper thread ties off the hackle and wings. This is certainly the *safest* plan should the dubbing thread fray at all.

There are some feathers used as hackles which in their natural state would be too thick in the quill and heavy in the fibre for a delicate trout fly, as grouse and woodcock hackles, etc. These are, like the hackles in some instances, as I have before mentioned, stripped on one side (see Plate XXI, Fig. 11). The object is to get off as much of the quill as possible without breaking the feather; and here again be careful that the right side of the feather be stripped away, as if the wrong one be taken off it will be difficult to wind it on. If the operator winds the feather away from him, he must lay the feather with the outside (the bright side of the two) upwards, and strip off that side of it which is on the left hand. If he winds the feather towards him, of course the reverse side must be taken off.

There is also a method of preparing a hackle which, though chiefly used in salmon flies, can equally well be adopted for trout if it be thought desirable. Take hold of the tip of your hackle with a pair of spring tweezers, put them over whichever finger be most convenient for the length of the hackle on the left hand; bend the hackle back until you can take hold of the butt of it between the finger and thumb, the bright or upper face of the hackle lying downwards towards the knuckles (see Plate XXI, Fig. 8), moisten the finger and thumb of the right hand, and taking the two sides of the hackle between them, press them together, gently drawing them back towards the butt of the feather at the same time. Continue this process the whole length of the hackle until the fibres remain in an angular position with respect to the quill and each other instead of flat as previously (see Plate XXI, Fig. 9). In this manner the hackle can be laid on very neatly, and the fibres will point all one way with great regularity—albeit the legs of a natural fly by no means do so; and in this respect our neatness rather overdoes nature.

In comparing the colours of the material with those of the natural fly, a due allowance should always be made for the wetting which the fly gets, as this frequently deepens and darkens the colour two or three shades. Always wet the fly before comparison. Even the very laying on of the materials, particularly in bodies, will deepen the colour. The waxing of silk will deepen it many shades. All this should be borne in mind, for the fly which on the hook will resemble those flitting over the water to a nicety, will, when on the water, be two or three shades darker, and will not consequently resemble it at all; *and colour is a point beyond all others on which the fish are very critical.*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SALMON FLY DRESSING.

In referring to the various parts of a salmon fly, I must refer the reader to Plate IX, Fig. 8, page 211:—*a*, is the tag; *b*, the tail; *c*, the butt; *d*, the tinsel; *e*, the body; *f*, the hackle; *g*, the shoulder hackle; *h*, the under wing; *i*, the upper or over wing; *j*, the cheek; *k*, the head; and *l*, the loop.

Some persons also dress a salmon fly by the aid of their fingers alone*, and others, particularly with the more complicated flies, use a vice and all the other implements already mentioned for trout flies; but the vice to be used for salmon flies must be larger and more powerful than that employed in the making of trout flies. Again, some persons tie the gut to the hook as in trout flies; and though this is the neater plan, perhaps, and makes the fly swim more accurately, it is not safe, as the gut at the head of the fly soon gets wounded, and then your fly is useless for ever. Some lash a piece of stout single or treble gut, doubled on to the shank of the hook, leaving a small eye just above the end of the shank, and through this eye a strand of gut is passed and made fast by a knot, hitch, or jamb; the other end, having a loop, is looped on to the casting line. This is, perhaps, the more clumsy and coarse plan, as it thickens the shank of the hook and adds bulk to the fly. Some, again, employ hooks which have an eye already forged at the end of the shank; and though this in time is apt to fret and wear the gut somewhat, it is, if the tie be looked to now and then, not only the neatest and safest way, but the fly is safe until it is pulled to pieces or smashed against a stone. The fly tyer can adopt any of these plans which he may think fit. The gut loop is the most common plan, so I will briefly describe it.

Take the best bit of salmon gut you have, round and thick—it is the best economy, one ordinary strand will cut into about four loops—double it, leaving one end somewhat longer than the other, bite the gut that is to be lashed to the shank well up and down between the teeth to ensure its not drawing; then lay it to the hook, and with a fine strong double thread of glover's silk, or any other silk that is fine and strong, well waxed, begin at the head or shoulder and lash it firmly on, leaving a gut loop as in Plate XXII, Fig. 2. And here I may pause to say, always get the best, newest, finest, and strongest silk you can buy for money. It is not always easy to obtain. Old silk is pretty sure to get rotten, and rotten silk is an abomination. It always fails you when it should not—just as you are tying in or tying off a hackle, and want to make an unusually strong and tight hitch. You must have two or three colours; the lighter ones are best, white best of all, yellow next, and then red; avoid green or black, as those dyes rot the silk, green especially.

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* Professional tyers seldom, even with salmon flies, use a vice. Their fingers answer all purposes, and they get on so much more rapidly than the amateur, and obtain so much more precision, by carrying out only one process at a time when tying flies in bulk or large numbers. For a certain time, for example, they will tie nothing but bodies, and then having selected a good stock of the various coloured dubbings required, no time is lost in hunting for each separate colour. There they lie ready to hand, and a pinch is picked off one after the other as it is required, and the tyer goes on tying bodies, perhaps two, three, or four dozen or more, all of the same pattern, until the dubbing is exhausted; the consequence is, that if any fault is made in one body, it is instantly corrected in the next. After this hackles, and then wings, are served in the same way. The result of this practice is wonderful accuracy, quickness, and neatness.—F. F.

Having tied in your loop, leaving a good long end of silk hanging down, proceed to business; and here, again, I must pause to bid you observe that you do not commence to tie the gut on quite up to the end of the hook, as observe in the cut. If you do, you make an unsafe and clumsy shoulder to the fly. Now put your hook in the vice, if you use one, as most amateurs do. The young tyer particularly will want all his fingers about the fly, and will not find it at all easy to hold the hook and tie too. He may possibly come to it in time, but at first he will find his vice a great convenience; and if he be a wealthy man, and can afford to buy one of those splendid vices of Holtzappfel's, in Cockspur Street, which cost some three or four pounds, and by which the hook can be twisted about in any direction, no doubt he will realise the convenience of the same.

Having fixed his hook firmly, he must, by the aid of the loose silk hanging from the bend of the hook, tie on the tag, which is usually a bit of tinsel. Let him make a long turn of the silk first over the end of the tinsel, as far down towards the bend of the hook as he wishes to go, then lap round lightly back towards the head of the fly, so as not to have to go over the same ground with the silk twice, and, having fixed the end firmly and taken a half hitch (see Plate XXII, Fig. 2), twist the tinsel two or three times round the hook, so that each turn shall be evenly side by side. Tie the remainder of the tinsel off firmly with a couple of turns and a half hitch, and cut off the fragment, but not too closely to the silk, or it may happen to slip out subsequently. It often happens that a turn or two of floss silk will be added to the tag ; when tying off the tinsel the end of a fragment of floss silk must be inserted in under the tie and tied in, the tying silk still being worked back towards the head. The floss is then served in the same fsahion as the tinsel, and cut off.

Then comes the tail, which is usually a small topping or some other fragment of feather. If two or three sorts of feathers or fibres be used, care must be taken to make them all lie together and in the same direction, which is usually, in the case of a topping or other whole feather, bending upwards and slightly away from the bend of the hook. Having placed the feathers on the back of the hook, take three laps of the silk and a half hitch. If a butt is required—as is often the case, as it serves to set off and add brilliancy to the fly, besides hiding the tie and the stump of the tail—after taking two turns of the silk, nip it with a pair of spring tweezers,* and let them hang down so as to keep the silk in its place. Plate XXI, Fig. 8, shows the spring tweezers holding the end of the hackle. Then take a strand or two of peacock or ostrich herl, or whatever substance be selected, tie on the end of it as in the former process (see Plate XXII, Fig. 3), take two or three turns of it, taking care that the fibres of the herl point towards the tail, and then tie and fasten off.

Next comes the body and the tinsel : as the simplest, we will suppose that the body is of silk. Cut off enough floss to make the body and to spare, also as much tinsel as may be needed, and tie the ends of them in close down to the butt in the usual way (see Plate XXII, Fig. 4). If the hackle is to reach from head to tail, the point of the hackle must also be tied in, if only half or two-thirds of the way down the body, it can be tied in after the silk and tinsel is tied in at its proper place, and then left to hang (Fig. 4). The tying silk is then wound on up to the shoulder, and there hangs also until required. Now, having clean fingers (for floss easily discolours and loses its gloss if handled with soiled digits), smooth the floss out and pull it so that it lies perfectly even and flat, and then wind it carefully round and round the hook, so as to make one round, even, shining body of floss silk. Simple as this may seem, it is not easy to turn out a first-rate silk body. The body should gradually, but imperceptibly, increase a little in thickness towards the shoulders; when it reaches the tying silk tie off the floss and then lay on the tinsel, which should be wound on in good bold spiral rings up to the shoulder, where that also is tied off (Fig. 5). Next comes the hackle, and that is wound on, following the course of the tinsel, and lying side by side with it (on the upper side of the tinsel, of course). Tie the hackle off, and then pass the silk round tightly four or five times, and finish with a hitch (Fig.6). Touch the silk with varnish to keep all secure, and lay the fly aside until dry, when the hackle can be pressed down into its place, and the wing can subsequently be tied on as in Fig. 7.

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* The fly here will require two pairs of them ; they should be short and strong, and of the shape shown in Plate XXI, Fig. 8. He will also require two pairs of scissors, one of a stoutish build, such as a pair of nail scissors, for cutting rough feathers, tinsel, etc., and one very fine pair to nip off fine fibres neatly. The points of these should always be in good order. They should be kept in a leathern sheath, and out of the ken of all females, or they will be looked on as lawful spoil and degraded to lace work, or to some hideous muslin enchantment designed to entrap some wretched *gudgeon.*—F. F.

At this stage it often occurs that another hackle is used, and two or three turns of a different colour are employed to add contrast to the fly. The length of the fibres must here be attended to: these must be properly matched, and if the fibres of the lower part of the supplementary hackle be too short, they must, of course, be broken off. A piece of hackle sufficient for the purpose is then tied in, two or three turns are taken, and it is fastened off, and touched with varnish as before mentioned.

If two or more hackles be required, either to thicken the hackling or to give variety of colour to the fly, the best plan will be to tie them in to their respective places while lashing on the gut; separate pieces of silk might subsequently be used, but the more work you can get out of the single strand the better, and the less bulky and clumsy the fly will be. Be sure, however, where a junction of hackles is to be effected, to carefully compare the length of the fibres, so that the hackling may graduate properly. To this end the fine point of the second hackle for some distance will have to be eschewed. But all this the fly tyer will discover after a failure or two.

And now as to the putting on of a hackle. There are various methods adopted. First, if the hackle be not wanted very thickly on the fly, one side is stripped off, as is described in the directions to the trout flies. Take care you strip off the right side is a caution I must repeat. To make a hackle lie very neatly and well upon the fly, it is best to prepare it as is also described in the direction for tying trout flies. Sometimes, though not often, two hackles of a different colour are used at the same time. Having "prepared" them both, lay one lengthwise within the other, and wind them on both at the same time. I may state here, that this is a good plan where very thick hackling is desired, as in palmers, for chub-fishing, for example.

One of the most difficult hackles to strip and make ready for the hook is the small blue barred feather in the jay's wing. It requires to be stripped with great care and nicety, so as to take off as much of the quill as possible without weakening the feather too much; the process is much the same with a grouse, bustard, or other hackle. Taking care to select the proper side, separate the fibres on one side or the other near the top, and then pull them steadily apart as evenly as possible, so as to strip off one side of the feather entirely. If too much of the quill be left on near the butt of the feather, so that it would roll on clumsily, take a very sharp knife, and with great care not to cut or damage the quill, shave off some of the pith until you have it to the requisite thickness of substance. It is a common practice to prepare a large number of jay's feathers thus, so as to have plenty in hand; but it is not a good plan, as they are apt to fade somewhat, and lose some of their brilliancy, which is a great desideratum in a jay's feather. The newer you can get your feathers the better, and it is not therefore desirable to prepare a very large stock, more especially as, by long keeping, the stripped and shaved quill gets dry and brittle and weak, and an old one is very apt to break in the rolling on. Hackles, more particularly in the spring, when kelts abound whose lean jaws and long teeth play havoc with good flies, are very apt to get cut; they then unroll, and the fly is almost useless. In such flies the method of rolling on the tinsel the reverse way, and after the hackle, so as to strengthen the hackle, and to secure it from damage as much as possible, will be found useful. This plan was first used on the Spey flies, and it is invariably used on them now: it is by no means a bad plan, but requires some little care and neatness.

And now we come to the nicest operation of all, which is that of winging the fly. If the body and hackle have been put on judgmatically, a short space at the head of the hook is left uncovered. See that the silk is strong and well waxed, and then select the feathers or fibres of feathers you design to use. In some flies but one feather, as mallard or turkey, is used to form the wing. Two slips of this material can be tied on in the usual way, no further directions being needed than are given in trout fly tying. In some flies, however, especially in the Dee flies, these wings are tied on so as to spread out apart. It is needless to say that they must set at the same angle precisely, and this the tyro will find not easy to accomplish. See that the slips correspond exactly. Settle the length carefully, and nip the butt of each feather, and if a tie of silk be lapped round it the tyer will be able to make it set easier ; then tie the slips on at the right angle, one at a time, and after tying on a dozen or two, and making as many awful abortions, he may hope to get some idea of the manner. If they are to run in slips or fibres, cut the slips from feathers out of right and left wings if possible, and they will lie and show the better ; lay the slips upon one another on either side, with the best sides outwards, between the left forefinger and thumb, as in trout-wings, taking care that the points of the feathers properly correspond in length. When you have as many slips and fibres as you require, having measured and judged carefully the length of wing you need, at the right spot pinch the butts of the feathers together with the right thumb-nail and forefinger so as to get the butt of the wing compressed into the smallest possible space preparatory to tying on. Lay this point of the feathers to the bare place in the hook already spoken of, and take two turns with the tying silk, which you can then keep in its place by the weight of the spring tweezers ; then relinquish the wing, which up to this time you have held between the left finger and thumb, and see how it sets. Should any of the feathers have turned or not set well, you must work the wing about until they are righted, or you may have to slacken the silk, or even, if things are very bad, to rearrange the feathers, or even to shear off the offending fibres. No special directions can be given in such a case ; practice alone will enable the fly tyer to overcome such difficulties. When all sets right, take three or four sharp turns with the silk, and then a half hitch. If you want the fly to be very firm and strong in the wing, touch the tie now with a drop of varnish, and lay it aside until dry.

If an under wing as well as an over wing be used, of course it must be tied on first, and then the over wing. Cheek feathers —that is, short feathers, as kingfisher or small jungle cock, which are often put on at the shoulder on either side of the wing to give additional brilliance to the fly or toppings over the wing—are always put on after the main portion of the wing, and both are often very troublesome to get to set well. The cheek feathers will sometimes turn any way but the right when the silk presses on them, and here also practice alone will enable the tyer to contend with the difficulty.

When the feathers of the wing are tied safely on, cut off the refuse at the head of the fly, pretty closely to the tie, unless you have toppings to put on. Toppings before being laid on should be nipped with the thumb-nail at the butt, and the quill bent slightly, so that they may, when tied on, have the proper set (see Plate XXII. Fig. 9, p. 331); and one of the most difficult operations I know of is to make half a dozen toppings set and lie well together; one or the other, particularly if they be pretty large ones, will "stare" or point out of the right direction, thus rendering the fly, which in other respects is an artistic and well-tied *chef-d'œuvre,* the visible sign of a tyro and a bungler. Many a time have I arranged a wing of toppings a dozen times over before I could get them to set properly. To avoid having to drill such an awkward squad, the tyro should select the toppings he is about to employ with care. They should all be of the same form and bend, and the quills straight and true, for if one quill turns towards the left, and another towards the right, unless he can nip them properly and with certainty, so that they shall take the tie kindly, they will assume their natural bias.

Not that it matters two straws to the fish whether the topping bends one way or the other, for in the water the stream soon corrects all such little eccentricities; in fact, it is possible that the fish may prefer them so, as having more play and motion. They are often dressed upside down, and stand like a Prince of Wales' plume in the "Erne Parson;" but it is not the fish he has to please but that hostile critic at the other table, that chap Jones, who can knock off two flies to your one, and whose hackles and toppings never stare, whose tails curve upwards in *one* right line (not several), and whose wings drop into their places like magic, and never want rearranging, while his heads don't come to pieces on handling. Ah! what a treat it is to see Jones take your fly out of the vice, and to hear him ask "What is this meant for? and what makes you prefer a fly with a tail like a turkey cock?" What makes you, eh? why, envy, hatred, malice, and all uncharitableness make you. But never mind, your bungle wipes Jones's eye for all that, and catches *that* eighteen pounder in an unguarded moment which he missed the other day; so equilibrium, as far as you are concerned, is restored, though Jones is sulky of course, and hints darkly, opprobriously, and distantly, as though alluding to something taking place on Benmore, miles away, about " muff's luck."

The toppings tied on, cut off the refuse butts of the feathers, as before directed, touch with varnish, and allow to dry.

The last thing you have to put on is the head. Now, it is the custom to make heads of ostrich or peacock herl, but such heads never last, they soon whip out and come to pieces ; and to put in anything that you know will not last is simply absurd. I generally use some small chenille of different colours ; two turns of this well tied off will last, and preserve the tying of the wing from damage for ever. No matter what you use, lay the end of it against the hook *on the under side*, where we would suppose the throat to be. The herl or chenille lying towards the body of the fly (see Plate XXII, Fig. 7, p. 331), tie it on with one or two turns of the silk, then take one or two turns of the substance and tie it off.

If the fly be well and properly tied there should be yet a slight fragment of the hook left unoccupied between the head and the eye or loop. Take one or two turns of the silk round this and fasten off strongly, touch with varnish, and hang up your fly to dry thoroughly : it is now complete. In all processes where you touch with varnish allow it to dry thoroughly before you go on with the next process. Fig. 8 shows the head, etc., all complete.

This is the way which I employ in tying a salmon fly, and I think it is the best and simplest. I puzzled this plan out for myself, never having taken a lesson of a fly tyer in my life, though after I was able to tie a fly I have watched many professors at work. There are other ways, most of which, I think, are more complicated and difficult. There is one plan already mentioned, and which is sometimes advantageous, and that is, when beginning the fly, to use a good long piece of silk, and to commence in the middle of the silk, allowing one end of it to hang down at the shoulder. This comes well in, if a fur body be used, for tying off the hackles, tinsel, wing, etc.

If a fur body be used instead of a floss one, select your fur, pig's wool, mohair, seal's fur, or whatever the substance may be, pull it into short lengths, particularly pig's wool or mohair, pick out the coarse fibres, and then lay a sufficient quantity along in the palm of your hand and roll it over and over by the fingers, as already directed in trout flies. The body will most probably be too thick, and you must pull off or pick out as much with your dubbing needle as you may think desirable, until the body is reduced to the proper size. If there be not enough dubbing on the silk for the whole body you must feed the silk with a fresh supply. If a hackle needs to be tied in, say half-way up, put on only as much dubbing as will reach that spot, or, if need be, pull it off, tie in the hackle, and then feed the silk with more dubbing. When the body is long enough, pull off any refuse dubbing, and tie the silk itself with a couple of half hitches; then your spare end, above alluded to, comes into play to tie off hackles, tinsel, etc., if it be not frayed—if it is not trustworthy, a fresh piece of silk must be used.

In looking over other works which give directions upon salmon fly-fishing, the first work I take into consideration is Blacker's *Fly Making, Angling, and Dyeing*. The flies sold by Blacker were so beautifully tied, and his reputation as a tyer stood so high, that one has a right to expect first-rate directions from such a master; but I confess that I am disappointed in them, and that many of them appear to me not only puzzling but almost impracticable. His "easy way of tying a salmon fly" is first to tie on the wings the reverse way and these are afterwards to be turned and tied down the proper way, a process which, if it be not utterly destructive of the wing, is a needlessly bad one. Then the hackle is to be tied in at the butt with the dubbing and the tinsel, and these are to be worked down to the tail and tied off, and a tail is then to be tied on. Now, in the first place, what is to hide the tie which ties on the tail? Nothing; it must be left exposed. Then a hackle tied in at the butt, and worked down by the point, so that the point, which is much the weakest part of the hackle, has the most pulling and chafing. Then this hackle, as well as the dubbing and the tinsel, has to be tied off at the tail, and what is to conceal all that mass of tying off? Even if the tail is put over the top side of it it can only partially hide it, and a terribly bungling affair a tail so tied on would be, while below there is a perfect mass of tying exposed, with nothing at all to hide it. Again, if a shorter hackle is to be used, a turn or two is to be taken; it is to be fastened off under the wings; but the hackle must of course go on over the body, and how on earth is a hackle to be tied off *over* dubbing?

I never read such extraordinary directions, and if I had not known Blacker to have been an artist of the very first rank, I should, judging from these directions, have thought him no tyer at all. His directions, however, for tying the gaudy salmon fly, though of the briefest, show that his *modus* *operandi* is very similar to the one I have already given, so we will eschew his easy method and stick to his difficult one.

To explain the full method of tying the jointed flies with manes, mid-hackles, and herls, of Erris and elsewhere, would be a work of supererogation, as no tyer will venture to begin with such patterns, and when he is able to tie according to the directions I have furnished him with, quickly and well, he will hit off the method of tying any other pattern which may be possible or desirable without difficulty. Practice is the great thing, and a cessation of even a few months throws one back in the art more than would be believed by the uninitiated.

CHAPTER XIV

CONCLUSION

On Hooks—The Bait Table—Recipes and Notabilia

PERHAPS there is no point of greater importance, or to which the great majority of anglers pay less attention, than that of hooks. Yet everything depends upon having a hook that will take a good hold and keep it. No matter if you possess the most perfect skill, if your tackle be as fine and as sound as can be manufactured, yet if your hook be not thoroughly trustworthy all the rest is set at nought, There is no economy so miserable, so shortsighted, and so expensive in the long run, as that indulged in by buying cheap hooks. A hook may be bad from various causes. It may be badly tempered, being hardened either too much or too little. In the first case, the point will certainly break in the strike when it touches a bone, and you will lose your fish ; and lucky are you if that be the only fish you lose. Usually the angler from carelessness loses, misses, or scratches two or three other fish before the fact dawns upon him that there may be something amiss with the hook ; and, when he examines it, he finds that the fine delicate extreme point is gone, and a rough, scratching, blunt point, that cannot be made to take a hold anyhow, remains. Even with the best of hooks this accident will sometimes happen, should the point strike on a hard solid bone. In these instances a touch of a fine needle-file (the finest kind of file in use) will put all to rights again ; but so biting and effective are these files that they cut very keenly, and, therefore, a slight touch or two is all that is necessary. But, of course, with over-tempered hooks this accident is infinitely more probable. An over-tempered hook, however, a fresh point being given to it, will often take a number of fish without going again, the extra fine hair-like point having been got rid of, and all that will be required will be a rather sharper strike. Still, with a heavy fish you are never safe ; a jump or a jerk may leave you without a fish and only half a hook. This I have seen on many occasions, when not the slightest blame was due to the angler, save for his buying untrustworthy hooks. As a rule, the angler should always try his hooks. Stick the point carefully into a piece of soft deal, and then give the gut a smart (not too smart) tug, and if the hook stands you may fairly rely upon it. This is advisable with all hooks, for, though good tackle makers, as a rule, do usually buy good hooks, and pay a fair price for them, a few bad hooks may creep into every packet.

But, if an over-tempered hook be a nuisance, an under-tempered one is ten times more so. An under-tempered hook springs or opens with very little persuasion ; that is, the bend and shape of the hook is destroyed, the point stands outward, the efficiency of the hook is gone, and an entire change of fly is necessary. It is not of the slightest avail to bend the hook back into its place again, as, having once been sprung, it will spring again much more easily. The point off your hook is not as bad as a sprung hook. What can be more annoying than to find the fish well on the rise at some particular fly, to hunt out perhaps one solitary specimen of the fly from a half-forgotten corner of your book, and then, after taking a fish or two, to find the hook sprung ?

I will illustrate the nuisance of bad hooks by two short anecdotes. In the first instance the hooks were either over-tempered or made of downright bad stuff. It is immaterial from which cause they broke ; it is sufficient that they were bad hooks. A friend of mine, who owned some fine trout-fishing where the fish ran heavy, was a little inclined to be economical in the purchase of his tackle, and took it into his head one day, several years ago, to buy some flies of a tackle maker who was notorious for selling cheap rubbish. I will not give his name, even though he has long since retired from business, but will call him Snooks. I am not aware that any tackle maker of eminence can lay claim to the appellation, and, therefore, my words will offend no one. Coming to me one day, rubbing his hands, my friend displayed some very nice *looking* flies. " There, old fellow, look at that. Eighteen pence a dozen. What do you think of that, eh ? "

" Think ? " quoth I. " Cheap and nasty, for a certainty."

" What fault can you find with them ? Aren't they well tied ? "

" Oh, they *look* well enough," I answered.

" Look well enough ! Of course they do ; and they'll stand well enough, for that matter ; and why should I pay——or—— two shillings and sixpence a dozen when I can get the same flies of Snooks for one shilling and sixpence ? "

" Well, we shall see how they stand. I, for my sins, once, in a hurry, bought a dozen black gnats of him, and whipped them all to pieces in one morning for less than as many fish. I have never bought a fly there since."

" Ah, that's just like you ; you always run Snooks down."

" Not I. I care nothing about him personally ; I speak as I find. But, if the hooks and gut be good, and the flies be *well* tied, they cannot be had for the money, so as to leave the tackle maker who sells them a fair profit."

" Well, we shall see."

Three or four days after I walked into my friend's house. He was out. I went into his sanctum, where his rod hung always ready for action. On one of the nails below it hung a collar of gut, and the fly showed that it had been used but an hour or so before. I recognised the fly as one of the dozen my friend had bought at Snooks's, and, taking it in my hand, I found the point and barb entirely gone, the hook having broken at the bend. Just as I made the discovery my friend entered. I turned to him with the fly in my hand, and, holding it out, I uttered but one word, and that word was " Snooks." My friend was a little irate and a little confused. He had had hold of a good fish in the mill-tail, a three-pounder : the fish gave a jump, and, somehow, there was too much of a strain, or something ; but the hook broke, and the fish, of course, was " spoilt " for a month to come. It was a fine morning for fishing, so, taking town his rod, we strolled together down the stream. He rigged up another " Snooks " in the meantime, and, coming to a good cast under some trees, he rose and hooked a handsome two-pounder. The fish gave one flounder on the top, and he was away. We looked for the cause, and, lo ! the hook was the counterpart of the one I had seen hanging on the nail ; the barb and point were gone at the bend.

" Snooks ! " again quoth I, emphatically.

" Oh ! be hanged with your ' Snooks ' ; as if nobody else's hooks ever broke. I held him too hard."

" Too hard for Snooks," said I.

Sulkily enough he mounted another of the infallibles, as we walked up towards the mill-tail, where all was fair open fishing ; no boughs, no stones, no roots, nothing but water and gravel. Here he rose and hooked a fish of about a pound and a half, The fish played smartly for a minute. My friend looked round at me triumphantly. "What do you think of Snooks now?" The words had scarcely passed, when the fish made a slight but sudden plunge, and off he went, leaving the fly in almost precisely the same condition as the other two.

"Snooks!" roared I, for I began to get vexed.

"Confound it!" said my friend, "I really think there must be something in it."

"Hem!" I said; "never mind; mount another. Use up the whole dozen while you are about it."

"Yes, and then send the flies without points back as a present to Snooks I suppose, and ask him what he thinks of it."

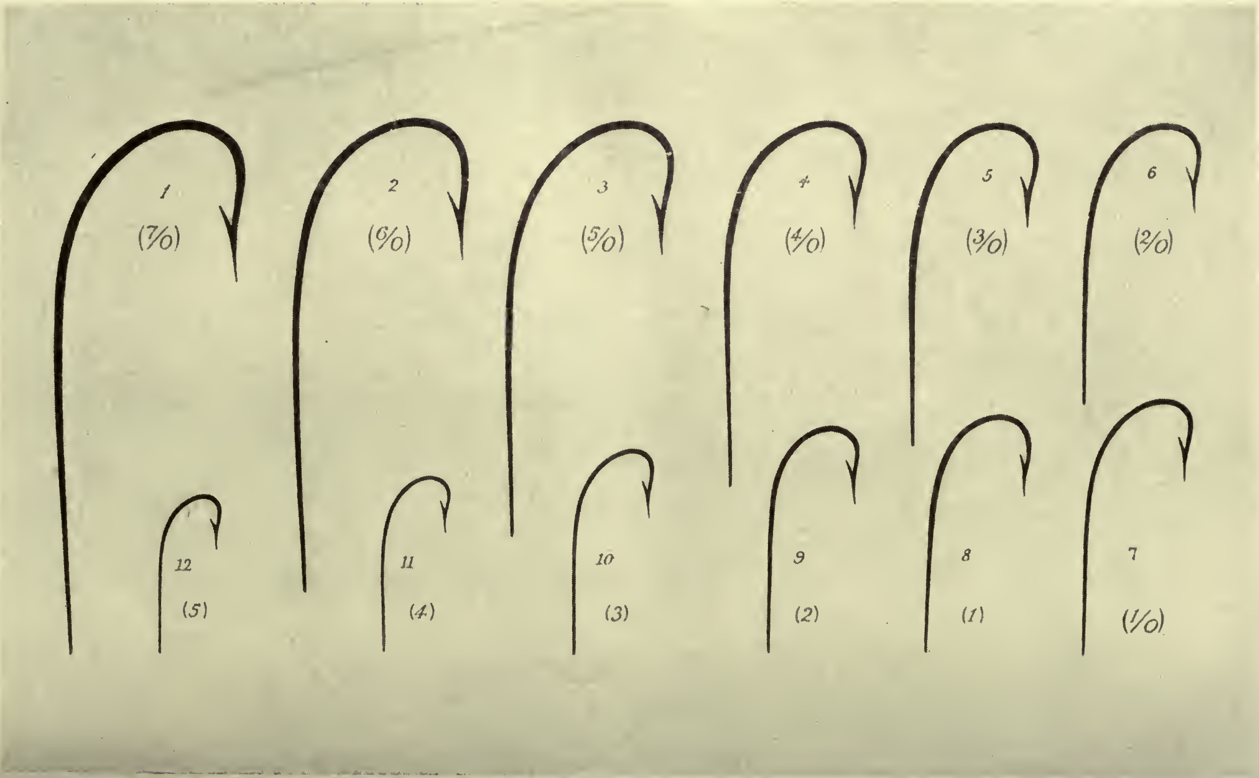
"Oh, he'd ask you in return what you could expect for eighteen pence," I said.

I need not say that Snooks lost a customer. The above is a simple fact, and my friend would verify it.

On another occasion I was fishing on the Test. I had not had very good sport, but the fish began to rise well at the yellow dun, and I mounted a fly from a fresh dozen I had bought a few days before. I caught two fish immediately, playing them but lightly. I hooked and lost another; and the fish were rising so well and boldly all over the water, that I got excited with the sudden advent of the sport, and forgot to look at the fly as I usually do after losing a fish. I made four throws and hooked or scratched and lost four good fish in succession. Then it flashed across me that something was wrong with the hook, and on looking at it, I found the hook so far opened that the odds against hooking a fish with it were very considerable. I speedily changed flies, taking one from a more trustworthy lot, and I took three or four other fish without an accident of any kind, when the fish left off rising.

The only means of guarding against such a loss is for the angler always carefully to inspect his fly after losing a fish. But he should always, when at leisure, try his hooks, as above recommended, and *throw into the fire all such as are untrustworthy*. Never keep them, but destroy them utterly, or they are sure to turn up when they shouldn't, and do mischief in some way. Added to this, let anglers have their tackle made of the very dearest hooks they can buy in the market, and give particular directions as to the sort and shape of their hooks, for tackle makers are mostly very careless on this point, and as they are the only persons who can profit by cheap hooks, they

PLATE XXIII.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11
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To face Page 345.

FRANCIS' SCALE OF LIMERICK HOOKS.

The figures in brackets refer to the scale adopted by Messrs. S. Allcock & Co., of Redditch.

are more prone to use them than they ought to be. The saving on the purchase of cheap hooks to the angler will not amount to half a crown a year, while the satisfaction of feeling confidence in your hook is worth any money.

Hooks are of various forms, applicable to various kinds of fishing. We have the Limerick bend, the Carlisle or round bend, the sneck bend, and the Kirby bend, and there are also various modifications and variations of these bends.

The hook scale in Plate XXIII shows the best form of Limerick bend in use; while in Plate XXI, page 326, I have given, as will be seen, the Carlisle, or round, and the sneck bends. Scales of all these have been given for the convenience of reference, as—such is the confusion caused by the various methods of numbering—there is no other way of making myself understood. Indeed, it often happens that makers are not true even to their own sizes. I may add here that the sizes given for trout flies refer to the sneck bend scale.

The best hooks, particularly for salmon-fishing, are those which will take the largest hold and keep it. For this purpose few have been held to be better than Phillips's (of Dublin) Limerick patterns. Not those of the "hollow-point," as the straight-pointed hooks are called; they are in my eyes simply detestable. I never had any confidence in them, and believe that the point cuts the hold out. The hold in a salmon's mouth is mostly a flesh hold, not a bone or gristle one, and a point that cuts must be avoided. Now, in Plate XXIII it is evident that, instead of cutting, the point of the hook being ranked outwards slightly, insinuates itself farther and farther *outwards*, or away from the shank, thus increasing rather than decreasing the hold; but this ranking outwards is often carried to excess, and the stroke consequently, instead of falling full and direct upon the point of the hook falls *on the inside* of the point, and often causes the strike or tug to become "a scratch" instead of "a hold." Plate XXII, Fig. 1, page 331, shows a hook which I have a high opinion of. It was first introduced to me by Dr. Sheil, years ago, and he gave me a pattern. Lately, when writing to him about the hook, he sent me another pattern precisely similar, but recommended that the shank should be lengthened slightly, and I wrote to Messrs. Allcock, of Redditch, who were the makers of the pattern, to send me some of the improved pattern. The only objection to the hook which the Doctor mentions is, that in deadish water it hangs rather up and down too much, though in a swift stream it swims on an even keel. One of the best hooks I have seen is the American Kinsey hook, made by Messrs. Hutchinson, of Kendal, who make the finest classes of hooks; it has somewhat of a resemblance to the Limerick bend, but is shorter from the bend to the barb, and having a larger gape takes a larger hold, and does not wear it out so soon; it is a capital hook. Another admirable hook is one called the Sproat bend, being the invention of Mr. Sproat, of Ambleside. This excellent hook was brought out lately by Messrs. Hutchinson; a drawing of it may be seen in Plate XXII, Fig. 10, page 331. It has many of the advantages of the Kinsey hook. Whether hooks should be heavily or lightly ironed will always depend on circumstances not worth considering here.

Passing from salmon, we come to trout hooks; and for large flies up to sea trout size there is nothing like a good bold Limerick, unless it be the Kinsey pattern before noticed, which would be the perfection of a sea or lake trout hook. In lake or still water fishing the fly should swim upon an even keel, and therefore no sneck bend or twisted point should be employed, or the balance cannot be fairly maintained. In swift or troubled water this is not of so much consequence. In small trout flies the point must be twisted slightly, or the hook will often fail to take hold at all, for the body and the hackle will often stand out sufficiently to help to guard the point to some extent, and if the hook chance to be taken flat or sideways in the mouth of a good fish, it may be pulled from his mouth without the point coming in contact with the flesh at all. To prove this, let the reader lay such a fly flatly between two pieces of softish card and draw it out: it will come out without a scratch. Not so if it be slightly twisted, as in the sneck bend. For these reasons I prefer for all small flies a sneck bend. The point should be as fine and sharp as possible, but not too long; the bark should be light, fine, and also short, so that it may be driven home with the slightest tug; it should, too, lay as close to the hook as possible. A rank barb, such as we see in the Limerick, is unnecessary and even objectionable, requiring hard striking and hard holding to get it home, neither of which are commendable or workmanlike in trout fishing. The hook requires to be of the very best temper, and the wire moderately stout, but not too stout; neither should it be too fine, or it will not stand. The length of the shank must be dictated by the fly to be used to some extent, but as a rule the longer the shank that can be afforded the better, and the farther off the fly is dressed from the bend of the hook (in reason) the better too, as the point has then a fairer play. In the south of Scotland and north of England they are very fond of the round bend, and it answers very well for the flies it is used for. These are usually dressed sparely, and have scarcely any body compared with the southern patterns, the lapping of the silk often forming all the body. The wing and hackle are exceedingly slight, and afford no guard or let whatever to the point of the hook. The fly is dressed high up the shank, so that the bend comes out far behind the fly. Thus dressed, they answer the purpose they are designed for.

I now come to the consideration of hooks for spinning tackle. The large single hooks much in vogue for spinning minnows for trout should all be of the round bend. There is no better hook for this purpose, as it communicates the proper twist to the tail, and is the correct pattern and size in respect both to the point and barb. If triangles be used, the brazed ones do well enough, but care should be taken to see that the points be not too long nor the barbs too rank ; though a trifle more may be yielded in the latter point than is advisable in fly hooks, as a harder stroke can be afforded, but it is the fashion often to make these hooks so very rank in the barb that considerable difficulty is found in forcing the barb home. And it should be always borne in mind that, as two or even the whole three hooks may take hold of the flesh, it requires very much more force to drive two or three hooks home than one, and if more than one triangle be used, of course this difficulty is increased proportionally. As a hard stroke is often requisite, it will be seen, too, that a stouter wire should be employed in the hook than is used for fly hooks, lest the hook break, which brazed hooks are more or less apt to do. I think that the heat they are submitted to in brazing rather over-tempers them, or in some way affects the temper, and that too very irregularly, for while some hooks seem to stand well enough, others do not appear to do so, more particularly if they have been used at all and then laid by for a time. Of all tackle oldish spinning-tackle made of brazed hooks is the most untrustworthy, and many a time have I rued the loss of fine fish solely because I have put up a flight of last year's tackle without testing the hooks first. I have seen one, two, and even three hooks stripped, that is, the points and barbs broken off from one flight by a stroke which ought not to have broken a single hook.

The upshot of this is, that old spinning-tackle, particularly of brazed hooks, should be always tested before it is used.

Hooks for spinning-tackle should not have the points too much elongated, as this part of the hook is the most liable to break, and should not be too long or slender; neither should the barb be too long or too fine either, as both point and barb often come into contact with bony and rough work, and should be constructed accordingly.

Hooks for pike-spinning in particular should always be of stouter wire than others, as the mouth of the pike is so bony as to require an extra hard stroke; and it is particularly essential that they should be not too long or fine either in point or barb, and the barb should not be ranked nearly so much as nine-tenths of them are. I have seen triangles with the barbs ranked more than in an ordinary Limerick hook, and when this is the case, if two or three hooks take hold, hardly any reasonable tackle will stand the stroke that is required to detach the hooks from the bait, and to force the barbs home into the pike's jaw. I know the extreme difficulty and force required to ram such a barb through, by having once buried one in the ball of my thumb, and the resistance caused by the badly ranked barb, in my efforts to bring it through and turn the hook out at the shank, was something incredible. It is owing to this fact that eight pike get off out of every ten which are lost when hooked in spinning. Two or three rank barbed hooks take hold, and the barbs are not driven home. You may never get a sufficient strain on the fish to drag them home (no easy matter either), and the first moment a loose line or a turn occurs, away come the hooks. To my fancy, pike hooks in spinning require almost more care and consideration in construction than any others, and probably they receive less. With regard to the shape of the hooks best adapted for spinning-tackle, Mr. Pennell makes a statement which, if it be borne out by long experience, is so striking that it settles the question beyond all argument. He says that the sneck bend hook possesses 100 per cent more killing power than the Limerick bend, and 50 per cent more than either the Carlisle or Kirby bend; and further, that whereas it requires an average pressure of three pounds to force home a Limerick hook, it takes two pounds and a half to the Carlisle, two pounds and one-third to the Kirby, but only one pound and a half to the sneck bend. Having quoted these facts from Mr. Pennell, I leave them to the angler's consideration.

All worm hooks, from the largest to the smallest, should be of the Carlisle or round bend. No other hook admits of putting on a worm so well, neatly, or quickly.

I now come to roach hooks, and probably more thought and care have been bestowed on them than upon all the others put together; and yet many of the patterns are not only bad but execrable. As a rule, the shanks are almost always too short to strike properly. Take an ordinary short-shanked roach hook, just fix the point in a stout piece of paper, pull the gut gently, and see what ensues, and the position the hook takes. The shank of the hook and the gut will form a small obtuse angle; in some cases, almost a right angle. The whole strain falls on the *inside* of the point instead of directly on the point; you may pull, but the effect is not to force the point in, but to tear the hook open. Consequently, with such a hook, when the short sharp stroke peculiar to roach fishing is given, the hook springs instead of burying the point and barb, unless the wire of the hook be so coarse and unyielding as to refuse to spring, when a much harder stroke than would be necessary if the hook were of the proper shape may perhaps effect the object. But it has been the practice of roach fishers to discard hooks of coarse wire and to insist upon having a hook with a very fine wire, in order that the gentle or maggot which so many use for a bait may be threaded on the hook with the least possible damage, and the consequence of this has been that anglers have considered the bait too much for the hook, and consequently they have been using the very worst possible hook they could adopt for their purpose—very short in the shank, round and broad in the bend, with (if anything) an out-turned point instead of an in-turned one, and fine in the wire so as to spring rather than penetrate, consequently the point only gets fixed, the fish gives a turn over, or comes half-way home, and gets off; and when this occurs often, it spoils sport, as it by no means improves a roach swim to have a dozen or so of well-pricked fish in it. I have seen hook after hook of the above description positively give and open and become utterly useless in a dozen swims, and so, no doubt, have many of my readers. If roach fishers must have hooks of this shape, the wire must of necessity be coarse to give any chance of hooking at all a fair proportion of fish. I, however, greatly prefer a hook with a turned-in point and a shank of sufficient length. I got Mr. Wright, the tackle maker in the Strand, to have some made of this shape some time since, and they answer very well indeed. I lay some stress on the shank, as the reader can try the following experiment, suggested some time since in the *Field*. Take a long-shanked hook and tie three pieces of gut to it, at three different points along the shank, fix the point, and then pull each gut alternately, and it will be at once perceived how much more advantage there is in a tolerably lengthy shank than a short one. Of course it would not do to have it too long. If roach are shy and are biting so badly as that they only nibble and do not take the hook into their mouths at all, it matters very little what shape the hook is. The barb should not be too rank, as it is not only quite unnecessary but requires a harder stroke than should be given, and is liable to be broken in the frequent unhooking and occasional contact with bones, etc. All this is of the more consequence in roach-fishing because so many anglers fish with a single hair, when the object is to fix the hook with the lightest possible stroke, and this with the present shaped hooks is very difficult. The best shaped hook of this kind I ever saw was a French hook, manufactured in the Pyrenees ; and much as we look down on French tackle, our hook makers might take a lesson from that hook. Some roach-fishers use sneck bent hooks, and if Mr. Pennell's opinion of sneck bends should prevail, they ought to be the best shaped hook for the purpose. I, however, have used them in roach-fishing many times (that is, my fishing companion used them and I used some other form), but I never discovered that it actually hooked any appreciable percentage of fish more than the ordinary hook in use.

The scales of small hooks which I have given were lent to me by Mr. Farlow, and were made by Messrs. Bartleet and Sons, of Redditch.

BAIT TABLE

The Red Worm.—This is a very general favourite with fishermen. In the Nottingham district it is called the cock-spur. It will kill almost any fresh-water fish, but is used chiefly for roach, gudgeon, dace, tench, and carp. It is found in heaps of dead and decaying leaves, or vegetable matter, in rotten dung or dead wood. The best way to procure and keep a stock of them is to put a little manure, mould, a few cabbage stumps or mowed grass and dead leaves, with a bit of rotten matting or old carpet, and water it well now and then. This will breed and keep them. To scour them, put them in a pan with a bit of refuse damp netting or old cheese-cloth.

The Brandling or Gilt-tail is a beautiful little worm to look at, being clad in alternate rings of yellow and red. It is a more lively worm than the last, and is used for most of the fish named above, in common with the red worm. It also comes in for fine worm-fishing in the Scotch and Border streams, for which the red worm would be a size or two too small. It is found in old dung heaps, or rotten tan chiefly, but a good many may be found in rank vegetable matter in a state of moist decay. It is a nasty worm to handle, exuding a filthy yellow secretion of a most disagreeable smell. A little moss, in addition to the means recommended for the red worm, will be useful in scouring it.

The Red Head is a very bright gleaming worm, a sort of link between the red worm and the lob. It is the most active of any, and is found in rich mould, and notably under the old dead droppings of cows. Used mostly in trouting, or for perch, tench, etc., being too large for the smaller fish, and not large enough for barbel, etc. It is rather a tender worm, and easily damaged. Scour with moss.

The Lob or Dew Worm is the largest and perhaps the commonest worm we have. It is found in all gardens and fields, and many other places likewise, save where the ground is dressed with lime, salt, cinders, or such matters as are inimical to worms. In grass plots not very well kept ; village greens, and many places where the grass is kept pretty short ; the sides of garden walks, and such like spots, they will be found very plentiful after a good fall or two of rain, as soon as the evening comes on. Go out then with a lantern, and, treading gently, you may gather two or three or more quarts of them ; but the worm-catcher requires to be pretty active in grabbing them, and resolute in hanging on, as they dart into their holes, when alarmed, with great rapidity, and hang on when half in and half out with singular tenacity, often submitting rather to be pulled in halves than to let go. They should be scoured in a plentiful supply of moss, and looked over every day, the dead and sickly picked out and thrown away, or they poison the rest. In order to keep a good stock of them, fill an old chest or packing-case with clay, and turn some thousands of worms into it. This will keep them in good order till they are wanted, when they can be taken out and scoured. For the hook, those which are reddest, with a red streak down the back and a clean bright tail, are the best. The others do for ground bait. Used for trout, salmon, barbel, bream, and chub.

The Dock or Flag Worm.—This is a pretty little worm, found in the roots of flags, but as the red worm answers exactly the same purpose, is very similar to it, and is not a tithe of the trouble to obtain, I need not enter upon any special directions in reference to it.

The Blood Worm.—This little worm is rather a larva than a worm,* and is found at the bottom of stagnant pools in vast qauntities, so much so as at times quite to colour the bottom. It is said to be an infallible bait for roach. I have never tried it, as it seems to me, from its extremely small size and slender proportions, next to impossible to get it on a hook at all; however, as report notes it as a good bait for roach, I quote the report for what it is worth.

The Meal Worm.—This is not a worm either, being a grub or larva; indeed, it is the larva of a beetle, the scientific name of which is *Tenebrio molitor.* It is very abundant in mills and such places as large stores of flour and meal are kept in. It is a capital bait for trout, and no doubt for many other fish. There is no bait equal to it for a nightingale, so the bird-fanciers say, but this is a branch of angling I have not much knowledge of. They keep easily in a little flour, and need no scouring.

Gentles or Maggots.—These are bred from almost any putrefying animal matter. They are the larvæ of various flies. The best are those which are bred in bullock's liver; and the plan is to take a piece of liver, slash it about with a knife, and hang it up in the sun. The large blow-flies collect upon it and lay their eggs in the crevices. When it appears sufficiently blown, it should be taken down and put into a tub or pan, and kept *out of the way of cats* or birds. In a few days the eggs hatch into maggots. A few handfuls of bran are then added to the liver to keep it cool. In a few more days the maggots will have fed themselves up to their full size. They then require to be removed into another pan or tub half-full of bran, and only a few scraps of the liver left with them to feed on. As soon as they lose the dark spot, which before they are scoured appears in the middle of them, and assume a bright yellowish colour, they are scoured and fit for the hook. They should always be kept in the coolest possible place, with plenty of air and ventilation, or they will soon turn to chrysalids. These in turn hatch into flies, and the reader should be careful to empty his gentle-box when he has done with it, or he may when opening it on his next fishing-day be assailed by a cloud of huge blow-flies. The chrysalis is a favourite bait at times with the roach, but it is rather tender on the hook. Carrion and other gentles are mostly used for ground-bait, and require no scouring. They are obtained from knackers' yards, butchers, or tallow melters, etc. etc. Some of the larger kinds may at times be used for hook bait, but they are all inferior to the liver gentles. Gentles may, by being buried in an earthenware vessel, be kept far into the winter. Be careful to keep the gentles in a *dry* vessel, as, if the sides be wet, they can and will creep away; also, be sure that your tub, if you use one, be sound, as no crevice is too small for them to force their way through.

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* The name applies to the larvæ of several species of *Chironomus.*

Almost all fresh-water fish take maggots freely; notably roach, dace, barbel, bream, gudgeon, etc.; they are much affected too by trout and grayling.

Greaves or Scratchings is the refuse skin, etc. from the tallow melters; it is made into hard cakes, and must be partially broken up and scalded before use. It is a capital bait for chub, roach, and dace, the whitest and toughest pieces being used for the hook.

Wasp Grub.—This is a very killing bait for trout, grayling, and dace, and indeed for almost any fish, but it is too tender for the hook without some preparation. Supposing the angler to have obtained a nest, let him break off all the grubs which are uncovered, and with the embryo wasps put them aside for ground bait. The comb is then to be put into a jar, and that into hot water, and steamed until the grubs are tough enough, taking care that no water gets to the comb. Some prefer to bake them instead. Either plan answers well enough.

Cockchafer and Beetle Grubs.—These large grubs are frequently found when turning up the garden soil, turf, cow droppings, or under old half-dried dung heaps. They should be served as the wasp grub to toughen them. It is difficult, however, to get enough of them to make a point of fishing with them. They are first-rate bait for chub.

Caddis or Cadbait.—This little insect, which is the larva of various water-flies, is found at the bottom of streams. Its body being soft and easily damaged, nature has prompted it to make a defence in the shape of a case which it provides for itself. This case is smooth in the inside, and is composed on the outside of minute sticks, or bits of gravel and other matters and upon any alarm it retires within it. It is about the size of, and rather resembles in appearance, a gentle; it is, however, much more tender, and requires delicate handling in baiting. Trout, roach, dace, etc., are very fond indeed of it.

Palmers.—These, which are the grubs or caterpillars of various moths, particularly the fox and the tiger moths, are seldom used in their natural state, the imitations being so good as to render it quite unnecessary, whilst the flesh is so soft that it would scarcely be possible to pierce them without destroying them. The imitations, however, are excellent for trout and chub. They should chiefly be used under overhanging trees and bushes, which abound in some streams, but mostly in still waters.

Leeches form an excellent bait for trout, and may be used with advantage at times; as may also the

Cockroach, which is found in abundance in all old houses. The trout are so fond of a cockroach that they will hardly ever refuse one. The hook should be run through from the gullet to the tail.

Grasshopper, baited in a similar way, makes an excellent bait for chub and grayling, and trout will also take them. If small, use two hooks, insert the second, and put on in the reverse position. N.B. The hoppers or long legs must be removed.

The Cricket is also a good bait, but should be used like the cockroach and meal worm, chiefly in mill-tails.

The Cockchafer and Humblebee are admirable baits for chub, and may be used either by draping at the top of the water, or in mid-water. A good cut of an artificial humblebee may be seen in Plate X, Fig. 4, page 219.

The Crab or Creeper.—This is the larva of the stone fly, and is found in abundance under the stones and pebbles by the beds and brinks of many rivers. It is a most killing bait for trout, more particularly when the water is low and clear. It is customary to use two of them. In appearance it rather resembles the common cricket. It is very active in its haunts, and easily gets out of sight. A sufficient number should be collected on the morning of fishing, as they do not keep well. Keep them moist in a tin box.

Beetles.—There are many bettles which trout, chub, and other fish will take. Indeed, the question, perhaps, rather would be to decide what they would not take. The best, however, have already been noticed under the head of beetle-fishing. There is no difficulty in keeping them for some days. If small, two can be employed.

Slugs and Snails.—These are excellent baits for various kinds of fish. Trout are very fond of a good fat snail or a white slug, and chub have a decided *penchant* for a large black slug. If the belly be slit open so as to show the white, it will be almost infallible.

Small Frogs are an excellent bait for both trout and chub. In baiting with them, be careful only to take up a little of the back skin on the hook, so as not to impede their motions, and they will be found the more attractive.

Large Frogs are a capital bait for pike when fish cannot be procured. In baiting, Izaak Walton's directions are good to an extent, viz. put the hook in at the mouth and out at the gills, and then tie one of the hind legs above the upper joint to the wire of the hook. I think, however, a better plan is not to interfere with the gills at all, but pass the hook through the under lip and so through to the leg.

Rats, Mice, and Small Birds are also good bait for pike. The two first make a good bait stuffed with sufficient lead within to make them swim properly, and one good hook sticking out of the after part of the belly. Failing in procuring the skins, a tolerable imitation of water-rat can be made from a bit of the skin of a cow's tail. But these baits need never be resorted to when live or dead fish can be obtained. The best

Fish Baits are: for pike, the roach, dace, bleak, and gudgeon; for trout, a small dace, bleak, gudgeon, loach, minnow, and even bull head. Fish baits should be kept in a corfe with plenty of gratings in it. A corfe is simply a large box made of stout elm or oak timber, and shaped rather like the bow of a boat. This bow has a chain and anchor to it, so as to secure it in its place. There are usually gratings at the bows and on the under part as well as at the back and on the top. The latter two admit plenty of air. The corfe should be kept in a running stream, and in sunny weather it should be put in a cool shady place. It should now and then be cleaned, and the gratings freed from obstructions, and the fish should be occasionally fed with a handful of bread crumbs, chopped worms, or maggots, for fish cannot live for ever upon nothing, though they will live some time. If the fish be thus properly attended to, and the dead and sickly ones picked out daily, they will live and do well in confinement for a long time. Near the mouth of a drain is a favourite place for small fry, and a good place for the bait-net. In cold weather they take to the deeper streams, and are difficult to procure. In floods they must be sought in eddies and any quiet spot. In the winter, minnows are difficult to find in rivers. At this time they are usually packed away in thousands in some small hole under a root or bank in some little tributary brook, or up some large pipe drain. There are various ways of preserving baits. One is to salt them, but this so discolours them and makes them so soft that it is objectionable. The next is to preserve a lot in a wide-necked bottle or jar, pack them pretty tight, and fill up with spirits of wine. Gin will do, but spirits of wine does much better.* The other way is to paint them thinly over with glycerine. Either of the last methods preserves the colour and toughens the bait.

Paste is made of the crumb of new loaf, worked up with a drop or two of water and very clean hands. It may be made plain or sweetened with honey, or flavoured to fancy, or even coloured with pigments. Cover the hook with it; some work up wool with it to keep it better on the hook. Roach, carp, and other fish affect pastes.

Pearl Barley, boiled, makes an excellent bait for roach, and when the fish are inclined to take paste, they will take pearl barley; care must be taken not to overboil it, or it becomes too soft to stay long on the hook.

Boiled Wheat or Barley must be boiled until the outer skin bursts, which takes some time—often two hours. Wheat is a good bait for roach, and barley is used in Norfolk to ground bait for bream.

Cheese forms a good bait for a change with chub or barbel. Cut it up in morsels of the size of small gooseberries, and use pretty much like paste.

The provender of fishes is endless in its items, and almost anything edible may be converted into a bait. For example, fish will dine very much like humans—say upon bacon and peas, and bread and cheese; bacon being a capital bait at times for barbel, peas for carp, bread for roach, and cheese for chub, and the art of the angler consists in consulting their tastes and tickling their palates.

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* Formalin has superseded all other preservatives for this purpose.—Ed.

To Dye Gut.—First moisten it well, then dilute some ink slightly with water, and steep the gut in it; if only a light colour be required, for a short time; if darker, for a longer period. This gives a blue. For an amber, a very light discoloration many be obtained by steeping in tea or coffee lees, and a deeper colour by using the water in which walnut shucks have been steeped. For a green, boil a piece of green baize, and put the gut in the liquor while it is warm.

To Dress Lines.—Take equal parts of boiled linseed oil and copal varnish, and steep the line in it till well soaked, and then hang it out to dry, clearing off all the refuse dressing with a piece of rag. When the line is dry, repeat the operation. Some eschew varnish as being too brittle, using a spoonful of gold size instead. Gold size dries up the dressing more or less quickly, as the quantity used is increased or diminished. Boiled oil, with a knob of resin, makes a useful and hard dressing, and dries more quickly, but it is sticky when warm, and is rather brittle likewise. India-rubber dressing will be found preservative, which is not always the case with varnish and oil dressings, as these often burn and injure the line. Cut up some white india-rubber in small chips, and dissolve it in turps; dress the line with it, and when thoroughly dry it makes a capital dressing. All lines should be thoroughly dried and hard before using, or the dressing comes off speedily.

Varnish for Tackle, Hook Dressings. etc.—Break up small some shellac, put it into a bottle, and dissolve it thoroughly in strong spirits of wine; paint the dressing over with it, and hang it in some warm spot to dry, which it does speedily. Before using, shake up the varnish and see that the dressing is thoroughly dry. It is also advisable not to use the tackle until the dressing is properly dry and hard, or it turns white. Sealing wax may be dissolved in the same way, but it does not make nearly as durable a varnish.

Varnish for Rods.—The best varnish for rods is the "best coachmakers' varnish." Two coats of this are ample, but the first coat must be quite dry before the other is laid on.

Liquid Wax.—Dissolve some cobblers' wax in spirits of wine, shake it up, and lay on with a feather. This is very useful with frayed or weak silk, when tying a neat and delicate fly, as the spirit evaporates, but the wax remains on the silk.

White Wax.—Take two ounces of the best resin and one-quarter of an ounce of beeswax, simmer them together in a pipkin for ten minutes ; add one-quarter of an ounce of tallow, and simmer for a quarter of an hour ; then pour the mass out into a basin of water, and work it up with the fingers until prefectly pliable. A very useful and tenacious wax.

Dry or Brittle Cobblers' Wax.—If the wax be too brittle or dry, add the smallest possible morsel of tallow, and work it up with the cobblers' wax, and it soon becomes soft and usable.

India-rubber Glue—used to mend waterproof boots and stockings, by sticking a piece of sheet rubber over a crack—is made in the same way as the india-rubber dressing for lines, by dissolving india-rubber, cut small, in turps or naphtha. For this the black rubber is preferred, and the mixture is stronger and thicker than for line-dressing.

Cement for Aquariums, etc.—Melt some resin in a pipkin, and while simmering stir in by degrees about one-half the same quantity of putty ; pour it on hot.

To Dress Water Boots.—Beeswax, tallow, and black varnish, or tar, which is preferred by some, should be melted together and rubbed into the boots before the fire, so as to melt it into the cracks thoroughly.

To Keep Moth from Feathers.—Pepper them well with white pepper, and, above all, keep them from the damp. Expose valuable feathers to the air now and then. Chopped tobacco leaf is a capital preservative, and a little strewed on the fly-book is very efficacious. Camphor is good as long as it lasts, but it soon dissolves, and is very expensive, too. Cedar chips are said to be good.*

To Pack Trout.—Dry them thoroughly, and pack them in dry straw. If for a long journey, gut them, and dust the inside with pepper. Sting-nettles are said to preserve the colour for a short journey ; but never use grass, as anything damp is not desirable.†

To Stain Gimp.—Bright brass gimp is very easily seen by the fish. To discolour it soak it in a solution of bi-chlorate of platinum mixed with water (1 of platinum to 8 or 10 of water) ; then dry before the fire. (*Book of the Pike,* p. 97.)

Treatment of Boots, Waterproofs, etc.—Neither boots nor coats must be put too near the fire. They may be safely, and with advantage, placed at a reasonable distance from it ; but the best of servants are careless about this, and boots worth many pounds are constantly destroyed by hasty drying. John does not think of it over night, and when the boots are wanted in the morning they are damp. Then comes the fire to work, and *hinc illæ lachrymæ*. The sun, if you can make use of him, is a much safer medium ; turn the boots down as far as you can, prop them open with sticks, and let the sun's rays strike down into them. *Never allow your mackintoshes to be hung up on a peg,* for more mackintoshes are spoilt by this plan than by all the wear you can give them. The peg point cracks the rubber by stretching it, and a new mackintosh is often rendered leaky in one night. Even if hung up by the loop, which is appended to them for that purpose, there is a heavy drag upon two points, which will, sooner or later, produce the same result. I always spread mine over a chair back, or fold up and put it away in a cupboard when not wanted. Never mind what waterproofers *say* about hanging up. Repairing is their business, and wearing out is yours. Many a time have I got wet through with a nearly new mackintosh, and from no other reason than a minute peg split, not bigger than a pin's point.

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* Naphthalene is perhaps best of all.—ED.

† As the primary object of packing material is to exclude the air, nothing answers so well as *clean* white paper.—ED.

Dry Lines.—All lines and nets after using should be spread out, or hung up, to dry. A trolling or fly line can be unwound, and either wound round the back of a chair or laid upon the sideboard in loose coils ; but by no means put them away in the least damp, or when you see them again they will be found to be perfectly rotten and useless.

To Preserve Gut, Silk, Tinsel, etc.—Neither keep it in too dry, or rather warm, a place, lest it become brittle, nor in a damp place, where it will become rotten. Do not expose it either to the air more than possible or to the sun, for light appears to have a very deleterious effect upon gut and silk ; a hank of gut exposed in a shop-window speedily gets rotten and unreliable. I usually coil the gut and wrap it in a piece of flannel and put it away in a box till required. The same may be said of tying silks precisely, while tinsel must be kept in the dark to preserve its colour. It may be partially restored by wetting the fingers with a little spirit, and drawing the tinsel between them repeatedly ; but it never attains its pristine brilliance. Very dim tinsel in some old fly, which it may be thought desirable to give one more trial to, may be brightened up by the application of a knife.

Old Flies or Hooks Drawing.—Many an old fly or hook will draw, that is, the gut will draw away from the hook when first used. But dry gut will draw when wet will not. Therefore, before using, or even testing, such materials, soak them for a few minutes, when the fact of their being trustworthy or the reverse may easily be ascertained for a certainty. Gut will seldom draw, however, if the extreme end is bitten or flattened.

Oil for Hooks.—Oil used for preserving hooks, swivels, etc. from rust should be boiled, so that if there be any water in it (as is frequently the case) it evaporates in the steam, and the oil is purified. If this be not done, the hook points will often suffer from rust in spite of the oil.

Marine Glue will often be found very serviceable in covering weak splices and securing ties, as it becomes extremely hard, is yet elastic, and will not crack, and is quite impermeable to wet even under the hardest work, which few varnishes are capable of undergoing. It is difficult to lay it on neatly ; the best plan is to pass a hot iron over it.

I have now brought the angler to the end of my instructions, and if I have succeeded in imparting to him any useful knowledge my end will have been accomplished.

THE END

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